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IN THIS EDITION

cover photos: David Winter

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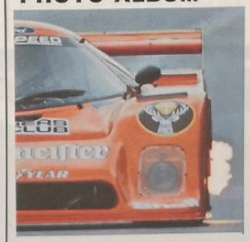

Aesthetically, we believe we have the best shots from Spa, Brands Hatch and Fuji: here they are.

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After the Matra 660 and the Ford P68 and 69 we turn our attention to the Can-Am and a major contrast with traditional endurance cars in the form of the impressive March 707. Only one was ever built, for Chris Amon to race at the end of the 1970 season.

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MORE JUNIORS

While the senior division of Group C now has two dozen regular competitors, and the grids slowly increase in numbers, Group C Junior is struggling to get established. There are signs, however, that the category will be more important next year.

Giorgio Stirano's Turin-based Alba team has recently completed its second carbon-fibre monocoque and Stirano hopes to sell more of these turbo-engined cars over the winter. Driver Carlo Facetti says that as many as four Albas may be seen next year.

At Brands Hatch, another C Junior made its appearance, albeit only in the pit lane and not on the track. This was Max Payne's Ceekar, a Ford BDX-engined machine designed in the Midlands by Derek Matthews. Payne used to race a much modified Group 5 Lotus Elan and the new Ceekar was based on that machine. The car wasn't quite ready, hence its presence in the pits, but it is hoped to complete a season of European racing with sponsorship from locksmiths Arthur Hough in 1984.

THE KYALAMI 20

Twenty Group C machines will leave Europe as valuable cargo on a boat to South Africa at the end of October. These are the Group C cars whose entries have been accepted by the Kyalami organisers for the final round of this year's Endurance championship on December 10. Two Lancias will take on two and possibly three works Rothmans Porsche 956s, while more Porsche opposition will come from Jöst (two, maybe three cars), two Fitzpatrick 956s and the Obermeier entry. Walter Brun is taking his 956 and his Porsche-engine Sehcar whose debut at Le Mans was so brief. The Mirabella Lancia is also making the trip, while another five cars are still subject to negotiation: the Canon 956, one of the Kremer brothers' Porsches, Henn's 956, Gotz's URD and Richard Cleare's Kremer CK5.

The likelihood of Porsche taking three cars arises out of the championship situation. With Jacky Ickx, Derek Bell and Jochen Mass all in with a chance of winning the title, Porsche may want to give them all an equal chance in their own cars. And Vern Schuppanmay be one of the co-drivers.

RONDEAU IN RECEIVERSHIP

The last time we phoned Jean Rondeau, just before Le Mans, he said that *"things aren't looking too good for us."* The latest news is that his little company, at Champagné near Le Mans, has gone into a form of receivership and had to dismiss seven of its 20 employees. It's a big disappointment for the French company and all those who believed in Rondeau's ability to worry the big names in endurance racing.

The representative of the Tribunal de Commerce in Le Mans has instructed Rondeau to stop building racing cars and to withdraw from the Group C championship. *"We were unable to meet our obligations,"* he admits. *"Last year I worked out an ambitious competition programme, but then my major sponsor, Otis (elevators/lifts), pulled out. There wouldn't have been enough cash to carry us through the off-season and I needed a sponsor to come forward right now so that I could make plans for the 1984 season. It didn't happen. The economic situation in France is hardly flourishing. My suppliers have been very understanding. But I know that they can't hang on for ever. They also need to be paid.*

"The reason why the Tribunal de Commerce hasn't ordered the company to be wound up is because I've told them that I believe we still have a future. Not in racing, though: we have to concentrate on earning money, probably in some form of light engineering. I have a drawing office, heat-treating equipment and a glass fibre shop, all of which can be used for non-racing work."

The message is clear. Rondeau and his staff have the experience and knowledge to move on to something different, into other kinds of business. It could yet be that Rondeau Engineering proves to be the salvation of Rondeau Automobiles, runners-up in last year's constructors' championship.

For the time being, if any reader is interested in picking up one of the famous Group C cars, Jean has got seven of them available: three 379s, one 382, two 482s and his latest creation, the 484 (an improved version of the 482). Prices range from 180,000 francs to 420,000 francs (between 45,000 and 105,000 dollars). All of them are suitable for Ford-Cosworth or Chevrolet V8 engines with the exception of the 484, which is specifically designed for a Porsche flat-six.

"I've always had cordial relations with Jürgen Barth of Porsche," says Rondeau. *"I think that may be the reason why he phoned me, just before we had to call in the Tribunal, and offered to supply engines to us. Since we won't be racing as a works team any more, next year we'll be able to offer customers a much more comprehensive back-up service. It also looks as though Ford will be running works-backed XR4 Sierras in the French touring car series next year, and I'm expecting to be involved in the development of the chassis."*

So Rondeau has lost a battle, not a war. *"The situation makes you stop and think,"* he says, *"both as a company and as an individual. It's a salutary experience..."*

BERNIE'S SHOW

GPI readers who happen to be in Paris next month will be interested in the exhibition devoted to the F1 and general sports work of our own Bernard Asset by his old school, l'Ecole de Photographie de Commerce et d'Industrie de Paris, between November 15 and December 20.

The school's address is 73 Boulevard Saint-Marcel, 75013 Paris (Metro: Gobelins).

An additional show of Bernard Asset's work will be held during November at the Fnac Sport concentrating on F1.

1984: ASTON V JAGUAR?

Viscount Downe's Aston Martin-Nimrod is a confirmed competitor in next year's World Endurance championship races. With fuel tank capacity limited to 85 litres by new regulations, the Richard Williams-run team expects that the Nimrod will be in with a good chance of top six placings. The Nimrod finished well in last year's events, but hasn't had the same luck this year. It is likely to be the only Nimrod on the grid, because the works team has gone out of business. However, Bovis, the English builders, have already assured the team of finance for 1984. Unfortunately, the same isn't true of Steve O'Rourke's Michael Cane-run Aston Martin-EMKA. The team is short of money, and didn't even participate in the Brands Hatch European championship event. Hopefully finance will be arranged for next year's series.

Aston Martin may well need the Nimrod to defend its honour, for rumours persist that Jaguar will be taking part in next year's World Endurance championship. Although Tom Walkinshaw didn't win the European Touring Car championship in his XJS, he has been involved in discussions revolving around the possibility of adopting one of Group 44's IMSA Jaguar XJR5s for Group C endurance racing. However, there is no official word on the result.

11 RACES FOR 1984

There are eleven endurance races on the calendar for 1984, including two in North America in August. The rest of the events are ones that have already been held this year, although some dates have been rearranged. The Nürburgring event, on the new circuit, is scheduled for July 15 — after Le Mans instead of before it, and Brands Hatch's race will be run a week after the British Grand Prix held on the same circuit in late July.

The big news is that two races are scheduled in Canada and America on successive weekends, August 12 and 19: Mosport is likely to be the location of the Canadian race, although no circuit has been mentioned in connection with the American event. And obviously, this race to some extent depends on peace being made between John Bishop, who runs IMSA and is a strong critic of Group C, and Jean-Marie Balestre, president of FISA which runs the World Endurance championship.

The projected calendar is as follows: Monza, April 8; Silverstone, May 13; Le Mans, June 24; Nürburgring, July 15; Brands Hatch, July 29; Canada/United States, August 12/19; Spa, September 2; Imola, September 16; Fuji, September 30, Kyalami, December 2.

THE THRILL HAS GONE

FISA President Balestre did not honour the Brands Hatch 1000 Kms with his presence, which we believe was unfortunate. Not because GPI had agreed to support the race (we regard ourselves as proud sponsors, not jealous ones) but because for almost two hours the Brands circuit was lashed by wind and rain, and the day was hardly complete without a President soaked to the skin. There was (of course) nothing personal in our desire to see him -- but it would have been for the good of endurance racing.

If Jean-Marie Balestre had been at Brands, he would have witnessed a fantastic spectacle once the storm had died away and the track started to dry out: the front-running Group C cars had used up so little of their fuel allocation in the slippery conditions after the start (the first refuelling stops took place half an hour later than anticipated) that their drivers were able to forget about saving fuel. For the first time since the introduction of the rule that requires five stops per six hours (or 1000 Kms), it was possible to see what happens when the drivers can turn up the boost and cast their "economy" worries to the winds. They can get down to the job in hand and start using all the road.

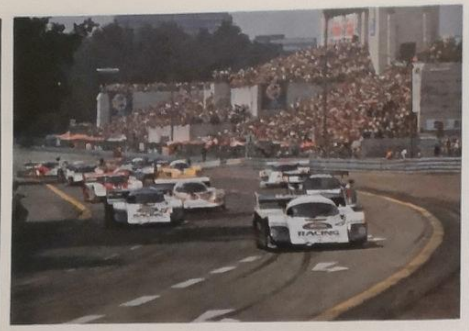
At a time when FISA is thinking about taking yet another look at the future of long distance racing, this happy climatic aberration demonstrates the futility of the "economy" formula. To introduce even stricter fuel regulations, as seems likely before the '84 season, may be an improvement in theory, but in practice it's nothing of the sort. We will continue to have the unedifying spectacle of the less economical cars tootling around as they wait for their refuelling stops to become due, a worry both to themselves and a mystified public.

Motorsport remains essentially an entertainment, in which the notion of racing and speed must continue to be omnipresent. How therefore can the unfortunate man in the grandstand be expected to understand why a driver should fight on the track for an advantage that is allowed to slip away in the pits as he waits for his next tankful of fuel to dribble through a fuel restrictor which is designed specifically to handicap the least economical (and, by definition, the most exciting) of the cars which he's paid to watch?

Without going to the excessive limits of Grand Prix racing, it is desirable that the length of a competitor's pit stop -- subject to normal regulations -- should be decided by the human factors involved, not by any artificial restrictions. The important factors should, once again, be the ability of the drivers to change places and the dexterity of the pit crews as they change wheels or replace brake pads.

As these lines are written, Jean-Marie Balestre was due to annouce some far-reaching decisions aimed at rebuilding the prestige of a class of racing which has not exactly lived up to all its much-trumpeted expectations in the first two years of its existence. Success for Group C could come from a complete re-think of the fuel consumption restrictions, and lifting those restrictions could -- quite apart from making the racing more interesting to the spectator -- attract back the many competitive teams which have switched to the IMSA championship because their cars are too thirsty to be raced in Europe. We believe that the return of those teams, whose absence we noted with regret when we wrote earlier in the year of the "gap between the continents," is essential to the future of endurance racing.

Didier Braillon



BOUNTY HUNTERS

Each July the cream of the world's long-distance drivers gather at the Norisring in Nuremberg for what's come to be know as the "Money Race." They know why they've come, and it's nothing to do with the challenge of the circuit, nor with the knowledge that you'll be racing past the concrete podium from which Adolf Hitler once harangued the massed ranks of Nazidom.

No, they come for the cash. If you're good enough, or lucky enough, to qualify on pole, lead the race at half distance and full distance, and to take fastest lap, then you'll pick up around 30,000 dollars for 45 minutes' work, *ie* slightly more than you'd get for finishing 2nd at Le Mans. And that doesn't include the extremely good starting money which Norisring is allowed to pay as a non-championship race...

No wonder, then, that there was a terrific entry ready to do battle in front of the 70,000 spectators who turned out for this year's race. There were two works 956s for Mass and Bellof, private 956s for Fitzpatrick, Hobbs, Rosberg (in the ex-Jones, ex-Andrettis Kremer example), Johansson, Lammers and Gröhs; a Zakspeed-Ford C1/4 (née C100) for Ludwig, a Zakspeed-Ford C8 for Niedzwiedz, Jelinski's CK5, a works Lancia LC/2 for Heyer, and more...

Bellof wasn't about to let anyone else beat him to pole, and he started alongside his contryman Mass from the front row of the grid. His best time was a full 1.5 second faster than the quickest of the private entrants, which is pretty amazing considering that the circuit is well under two miles and consists of two hairpin bends connected by a few swerves...

It goes without saying that the two Rothmans Porsches duly walked away with the race. Mass got away before Bellof, but the youngster didn't have to worry about getting past his team mate after Jochen, under heavy pressure, made a mistake on lap nine and half-spun. Wollek, the leading privateer in 3rd place, did well to be the only other driver on the same lap at the finish. He had spent a considerable time battling with the surprisingly quick Lancia of Heyer, who retired on lap 32 (of 54) when his gearbox broke.

There was a good battle for 4th place between Fitzpatrick and Rosberg, whose car was noticeably slow out of the hairpins, and Ludwig managed to beat Johansson into 7th place.

Although it didn't mean very much, the race was enjoyed by the gathered thousands (and a couple of million more watching at home on TV). It demonstrated that endurance cars and sprint racing are not necessarily incompatible, especially when you don't have to worry about saving fuel between pit stops...

RICKY'S ROCKY RIDE

Chiba, you see, is a man in a hurry. He's a success story: oil pumps as a basis branching out into the leisure business with windsurfers, camper vans and wet bikes which are like motor-cycles on water.

He'd done a deal with Preston Henn to sponsor his Porsche 956 and to allow his driver Kunimitsu Takahashi to drive with Henn and John Paul Junior at Fuji. Chiba had promised to come up with $50,000 for the team when the car arrived in Japan, but the cash wasn't immediately forthcoming. Later Chiba would buy the car, or that was the idea. With the tee-shirt came a scheduled programme of events for 1984: the Japanese endurance championship, IMSA races and Le Mans for the 956, plus races in the Alpha powerboat that has already won a championship in Japan.

While Chiba authoratitively directed the 956 in the pit lane, his credibility was wearing thin, however.

When Takahashi damaged the car's nose during the race, only Chiba's men sprang into action with aluminium to repair the broken fibreglass. Later, Henn's men watched, amused, as Chiba discovered that Porsche 956 bodywork isn't as interchangeable as VW Beetle doors. Erwin Kremer offered his Kenwood decorated nosecone, but it didn't fit: lesson number one for Chiba. The car was retired.

Next day, Chiba, looking every bit the tycoon in smart pin-stripe suit, had a ten minute conversation with Porsche's customer liaison man, Jürgen Barth, after which he announced that he was buying a new 956, pressing home the point by knocking into our man two or three times. Mr Chiba has exploded the myth that all Japanese are polite and courteous.

DOCTOR'S ORDERS

John Paul Junior couldn't believe it. He'd visited the Japanese doctor at Fuji twice already, and here he was, having to go back again. He was in the middle of discovering that medical checks for racing drivers in Japan are very very stringent.

First of all, the medics were worried about 'Junior's' heartbeat.

Then Philippe Alliot had his enormous accident during practice. And when such an accident happens in Japan, it is generally judged that the driver cannot have been in peak condition. He had made a mistake, they figure, and it could have been poor health that caused it. The doctors are suspected of not having done their job satisfactorily, so the entire medical team is replaced.

Consequently, the checks began again, and all the drivers, including 'Junior' of course, had to pay another visit to the doctors. Now the checks were even more stringent, and the doctors were so worried about 'Junior's' heart that they forbade him from starting the Preston Henn-entered Porsche 956 although he was allowed to take over after the excitement of the start was over. At 23, he certainly looks healthy enough...

PORSCHE FOR '84

Having virtually "saved" Group C racing this year by delivering a dozen 956 coupes to private entrants, Porsche-Zuffenhausen plans to make at least 15 specially-developed versions of this year's all-conquering model for sale in 1984.

There will be minor but important changes to the mechanical specification, including the adoption of the all-electronic engine management system used this year exclusively by the Rothmans-works team. The most important news, however, is that the '84 version of the car is expected to fill a dual role by complying both with the European FISA Group C rules, and with the GTP regulations of the American IMSA organisation.

To meet the IMSA rules the car will

have to undergo major structural changes, most notably to the driving position. This will be brought back so that the driver's feet do not extend beyond the centre line of the front wheels. IMSA spec cars will also have to use a single turbo version of the classic flat-six engine, as developed by this year's IMSA champion Al Holbert on his March 83G.

A little bird tells us that the asking price for a new Group C/IMSA Porsche (type number not yet revealed) will be up from 560,000 DM in 1983 to no less than 632,000 DM in 1984. John Fitzpatrick is understood to have ordered two already...

DEREK WARWICK COLUMN

It was shortly after six o'clock on Sunday September 18 that I broke my duck after three years at the wicket. For GPI readers who don't understand the great game of cricket I'm trying to explain that I was back on the winner's rostrum after 36 months away. The most recent garland in my collection was given to me at Monza in 1980, the great days of the works BP-Toleman Formula 2 team.

The elusive win that has made the month of September 1983 so sweet and satisfying for me was at the wheel of John Fitzpatrick's J. David Porsche 956, which carried the pair of us to victory in the *Grand Prix International* 1000Kms endurance race at Brands Hatch. What's more, we had the pleasure of beating both of the works Rothmans entries...

My enthusiasm for sportscar racing had been aroused by Le Mans, where (as you may remember) I drove the Kremer brothers' GPI-sponsored CK5 until it broke. I had pestered them to let me drive their "pukka" 956, and after the Austrian GP they telephoned me to ask if I would like to race the 956 at Spa.

We had hoped to get together for a quiet test session before the Spa race, but those plans were scuppered by the F1 tyre test with my Toleman at Brands Hatch. Immediately after that test I stepped out of my F1 car, changed, and then climbed into my Mercedes 500SEC en route to the Dover hoverport and Belgium, where practice for the 1000Kms was due to start next morning.

I love the Spa-Francorchamps circuit, although I'm not so sure about the climate up in those mountains. No wonder the Ardennes region is such a lovely rich green: it's well watered! Sure enough, rain greeted us for all of Friday's practice sessions, but at least I had an opportunity to discover some of the considerable differences between the Kremers' CK5 and the ground-effect 956. This was, in fact, the same 956 which the Andrettis had raced to 3rd place at Le Mans, although it had since been painted in the dark blue pin-stripe colours of Hugo Boss, the German men's tailoring company.

The rain had stopped shortly before the official qualifying session on Saturday afternoon, but there was only one dry line, and naturally everyone wanted to be on it. Going for a quick lap was rather like Russian roulette... and I kept pulling on the loaded chamber! I never got a clear lap on qualifying tyres because every time I gunned it past the pits it seemed that the pit marshal was ready to release a slow Porsche 930 on to the racing line into the vital Eau Rouge corner. At least I got 3rd fastest time behind the works Rothmans Porsches, which really were in a class of their own on a circuit where they could use all their Stuttgart-bred horsepower. Still, my time was set on hard race tyres, and I honestly believe that I might have been able to split the works team if I'd had a clear run.

The Kremers' plan was for me to start the race and do the first two stints. After one hour's racing I was lying 3rd behind the flying cigarette packets, but I was happy to let my co-driver Franz Konrad take over at the first stop because I suddenly needed the nearest WC (something I'd eaten was bothering me, not the power of the car!).

Uncharacteristically, the engine expired just before Konrad was due to come in for the second scheduled pit stop, so that was the end of my experience with the 956. Fortunately my efforts hadn't gone unnoticed, and just before the Brands Hatch 1000Kms I was asked by John Fitzpatrick to stand in for his regular co-driver David Hobbs in the GPI-sponsored race, which fell conveniently between the Italian and European GPs.

Unlike Spa, Brands is a "handling" circuit, and for various reasons John and I knew that we had a chance of doing well there. Our race car was the one that had been raced by Edwards and Keegan at Le Mans in the colours of Skoal Bandit "smokeless tobacco." Incredibly, it had finished 3rd (with Fitz) in a CanAm race the previous Sunday, yet here it was, looking immaculate and ready for action, after a quick service at Fitz's European HQ at Silverstone.

Immediately I liked the feel of the car. It was enlightening to drive on a tyre that remained constant in grip for lap after lap. For Saturday we produced a little "tweak" of our own to maximise the downforce. To his great credit, one of the British journalists spotted it, but he kept quiet about it until his report was published the following week. That means I can tell you about it...

Basically, our modification consisted of blocking off the engine air intake vents, under the car, which normally allow some of the ground effect to leak away. To cool the engine we fitted a couple of auxiliary fans — and the result was more grip. Fitz rolled off a few laps to check out the modifications, then — apart from a few laps in his spare car — he spent the rest of the morning session encouraging me to go quicker.

I simply couldn't believe his generosity. After all, I was only "guesting" for someone else. In the afternoon session I improved my time to 1m 18.4s, and I felt sure that I could have improved. But Keith Greene, our manager, agreed with Fitz that my time — 4th fastest behind the Rothmans pair and the Jöst "Marlboro" 956 — was quick enough when you think that this was going to be a 238 lap race.

If I hadn't known that the rain was going to give us a great chance I would have described conditions on race morning as miserable. During the short morning warm-up session we both realised that our Goodyear rain tyres were superior to any of the rival brands, so we hoped that the rain would persist.

Soon after the start I was able to get the jump on Wollek's 956. Then, after only one flying lap, I outbraked Derek Bell going into Paddock Bend and set off after Jacky Ickx. I passed him one lap later at Druids hairpin to take the lead. Sounds incredible, doesn't it? I've read so many times about the sportscar exploits of these guys... and there was I, leading them all.

To be fair, I have to mention that our all-round grip was superb in the awful conditions. I also knew that I had to capitalise on this, because although the rain was getting harder the afternoon forecast was for clearer skies. In the dry, we knew, the works cars would fly, especially with their superior fuel consumption, so I had to keep building up our advantage on a wet road, which I was able to do at the rate of three seconds a lap.

With so much spray flying around, conditions were terribly difficult. Avoiding the slower competitors was not always possible, and I must have made contact half a dozen times with other cars. At one stage the *inside* of the windscreen had got so badly fogged up that I considered coming into the pits to have it cleaned, but somehow a clear diagonal stripe appeared across it, so I pressed on with my head cocked to one side as I tried to peer out.

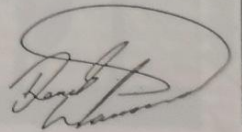
With just over 20 laps gone the organisers felt it necessary to "neutralise" the race, so they sent out the pace car. To begin with I couldn't work out what had happened, because my lead of 45 seconds over Wollek was shrinking down to 11 seconds. But the decision wasn't all bad for us, because Ickx got stuck behind the pace car, and when the re-start came I had only to pass the two cars separating us to overtake Jacky and put a full lap between us. Even when Bell passed Wollek, moving into 2nd place, my lead continued to grow over the works cars.

Towards the end of my second hour — with the track now drying out — I pulled in to the pits so that Fitz could take over at last. I told Keith Greene that the track was dry enough for slicks, which evened everything out and left Fitz with the job of defending our lead for the rest of the afternoon.

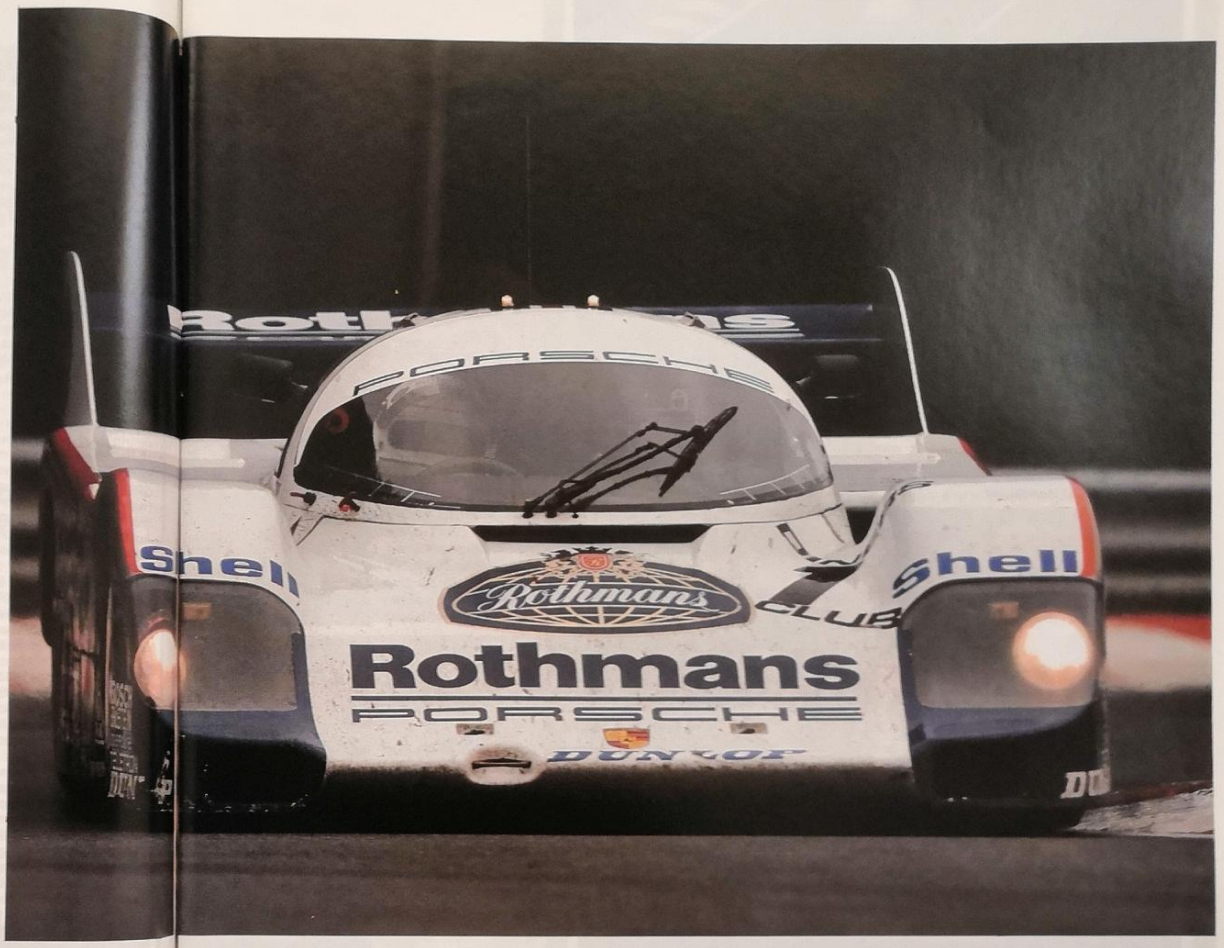
But in spite of having the might of Stuttgart chasing him, Fitz was able to hand over to me with most of our lead intact. There was one frightening moment for me with 15 minutes left to go when a much slower car moved over on me. I had to swerve across the kerb, damaging the nose and sending the temperatures climbing, but victory was ours.

Naturally, I was happy for everyone, especially for John Fitzpatrick, the nicest bloke I've ever met in motor racing. I was also delighted for my dad, who had been to Wimbledon the previous evening to watch my younger brother Paul winning the British National Ministox title. I got started in ministox myself, so you can imagine how proud he must have felt to see "big brother" make it a Warwick weekend double.

Yes, you can say I've become a sports car fan. When will someone offer me another drive?



SPA 1000 KMS



For the second consecutive year the winning formula was the combination of Jacky Ickx, Jochen Mass and a Porsche 956. The Belgian's first victory in this race took place way back in 1967, when he shared the winning 5.7-litre Mirage-Ford with American Dick Thompson. (photo: DPPI)

After the long break of 11 weeks since Le Mans, the World Endurance Championship recommenced at the Spa Francorchamps circuit in Belgium. But while Porsche is headed for a walkover in the Makes division of the WEC, the struggle for the drivers' title was much less certain as the teams arrived at this delightful venue. Winding through the Ardennes for more than four miles, the Spa circuit -- which hosted an F1 championship race in May to mark its return to prominence after a 13-year gap -- the circuit has already made itself a firm favourite with the spectators.

In the absence of the Ford-engined Rondeau team, whose chances of a WEC title were snatched away at this same race last year, there were just over 30 entries in the various Groups (C, C "Junior" and B), although several of them failed to appear. Among these were the BMW-engined Sauber which took a remarkable 9th place at Le Mans; the Group 6-based Lancia LC/1 coupes of Sivama Motors; the Ford-Cougar CO1B of constructor/driver Yves Courage; and, most notably, the long-awaited Tiga with its 5-litre Chevrolet V8 engine. Originally entered for Le Mans, the Tiga carries the hopes of Tiga director Howden Ganley (the former BRM Grand Prix driver) and of his partner, Australian businessman Neil Crang.

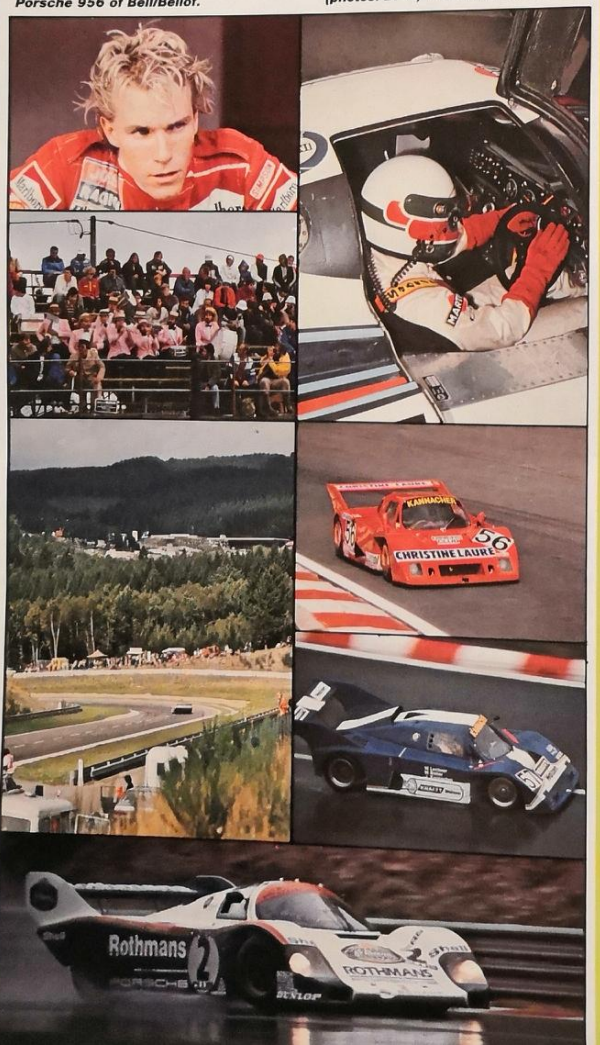
Just before the Nürburgring 1000 kms, Lancia team manager Cesare Fiorio had forecast that *"we will be ready in time for the Spa 1000 kms."* This was Fiorio's way of saying that although Lancia would be taking part at Le Mans, in reality the new Ferrari V8-engined turbocars could not be expected to be sufficiently developed to worry the works and privately entered Porsche 956s until the end of the season. As it was, the three little LC/2 cars (two from the factory, one entered by Scuderia Mirabella) which appeared at Spa differed very little in configuration from the ones that had made their debut at Monza in March. Since then, most of the track development appears to have been concentrated on adapting the cars to the Dunlop cross-ply tyres which were adopted before Le Mans after some well-well-publicised dramas with the original Pirelli radials.

With drivers of the ability of Patrese, Alboreto, Ghinzani and Teo Fabi (three top F1 men and the Indianapolis "pole man"), there was obviously race-winning potential in the team, although as yet they seem hard pushed to do anything about any of the Porsches except the slowest of the privateers.

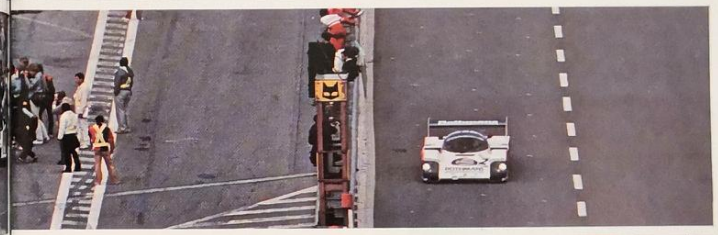
In fact there were nine 956 models in the paddock: two in Rothmans colours from the factory, plus the familiar entries from John Fitzpatrick, Reinhold Jöst, Obermaier Racing, Canon Racing and the Kremer Brothers. The ninth car was new, entered by the Swiss driver Walter Brun, who had decided to buy a "ready-made" car following the collapse of the Porsche-Sehcar operation which he had sponsored in collaboration with the Swiss constructor Seger Hoffmann. The Sehcar's first (and only) appearance, at Le Mans, had been a disaster.

GPI's friends, Manfred and Erwin Kremer, had repainted their 956 again, this time in the pin stripe colours of Creations Boss

Angry enough to kick himself: this was Johansson just after he'd collided with Riccardo Patrese and badly damaged the 956 he was due to hand over to world championship aspirant Wollek. The Lancia was also damaged, and Fabi (pictured) was brought in to share with Riccardo while Alboreto was switched to the team's surviving second car. The BMW-engined URD (56) finished 10th, while its sister car (57), with Porsche engine, retired on the first lap. Seen in the rain during Saturday's wet practice is the Porsche 956 of Bell/Bellof. (photos: DPPI, First Line, Peter Burn)



Ickx/Mass ahead of Bell/Bellof at the start. One thousand kms later, the order is destined to be the same. (photo: First Line)



Bell/Bellof held the lead for 61 laps, finishing 63 seconds behind the winners. (photo: DPPI)

A miserable day is accentuated by the wet tarmac in front of the pits. In the foreground is the Lässig/Plankenhorn/Regout Porsche 956. (photo: Peter Burn)

(men's tailoring) for a new pair of drivers, Derek Warwick and the German F3 driver Franz Konrad. This is the car that was driver earlier in the season by Jones and Schuppan at Silverstone, and by the Andrettis at Le Mans. The agreement with Toleman driver Warwick had been reached a week earlier at Zandvoort, while Konrad – who is best known in Germany for his Group 5 appearances in the late '70s – has made a successful switch this year to an F3 Anson-VW, with which he has won the national championship. The Porsche-Kremer CK5 coupe which Warwick had raced under GPI's colours at Le Mans was being entered for two Dutchmen. One of them, Huub Rothengatter, is well known for some excellent fighting F2 drives in 1981 (and has only just recovered from a serious non-racing injury), while his team mate, one Kees Kroesemeijer, is a Dutch national champion who has been racing a Porsche-engined URD in the German championship.

Apart from the Porsches and Lancias, there were three other Group C entries: the 1.4-litre-turbo-engined Ford Zakspeed C1/4 which "escaped" from the abortive C100 programme on which Ford had lavished so much money; Viscount Downe's Aston Martin Nimrod with lighter, more slippery bodywork; and the Ford-Cheetah G603, which was making its race debut. Built by the Swiss-based American Chuck Graemiger (who was briefly part of the Shadow F1 team in 1980), the Cheetah is powered by a 3955cc Cosworth engine specially prepared by Heini Mader: it had already competed in a Swiss hillclimb, when Marc Surer had driven it. Since then it had been tested at Dijon by former Le Mans winner Jean-Pierre Jaussaud, who was due to race it at Spa alongside the Swiss drivers Loris Kessel and Laurent Ferrier. The Dijon tests had revealed a serious problem in the steering, which made it completely impossible to turn the steering when the car was stationary, due to incorrect suspension geometry.

As a reminder of last year, Friday afternoon's three hours of untimed practice took place in hot weather under blue skies. Separated by two-second gaps, the Porsche 956s of Ickx/Mass, Bell/Bellof, Warwick/Konrad and Wollek/Johansson set fastest times, ahead of the Patrese/Alboreto Lancia: fastest time of the day was 2m 12.21s, almost three seconds faster than last year's pole position time even at this early stage and a great tribute to the remarkable speed of the works cars in Rothmans colours. Under the circumstances it was hardly surprising that the privateers – including the Jöst team which had been so impressive early in the year – realised that their chances of a win were thin indeed.

The following morning's weather, alas, did nothing to brighten the mood. It had been raining since before dawn, so it was under a darkening sky that the first 90 minutes of official qualifying took place on a soaking wet circuit. The water drained away slowly, so even though it soon stopped raining, it wasn't until the final 15 minutes of practice that a dry line appeared: naturally, this brought out some very heavy traffic.

Having got down to 2m 10.19s, Stefan Bellof thought that he had taken pole position, but just as the flag came out to halt proceedings Jacky Ickx – the experienced

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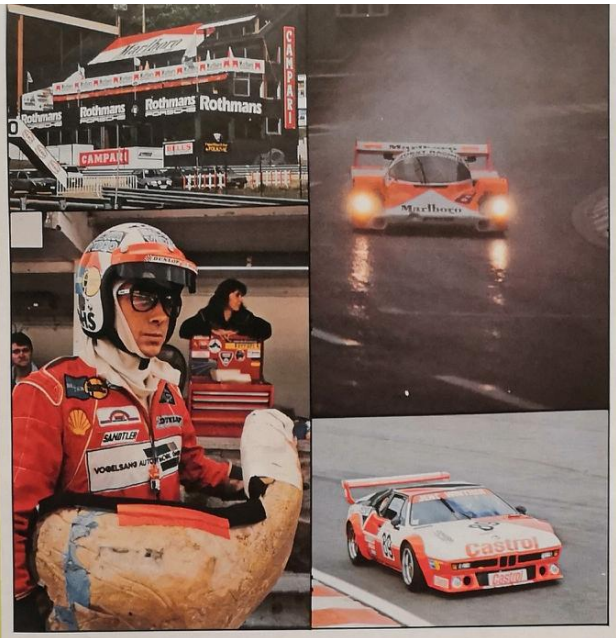
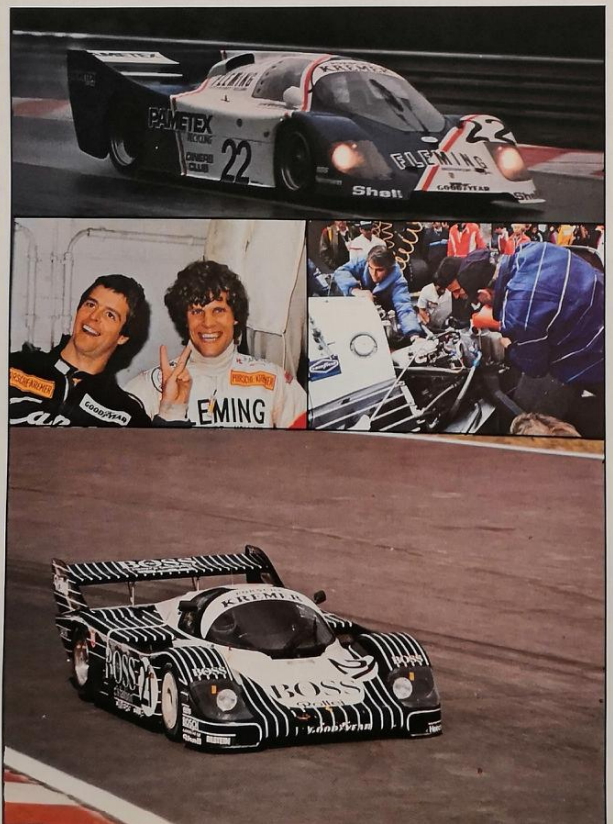
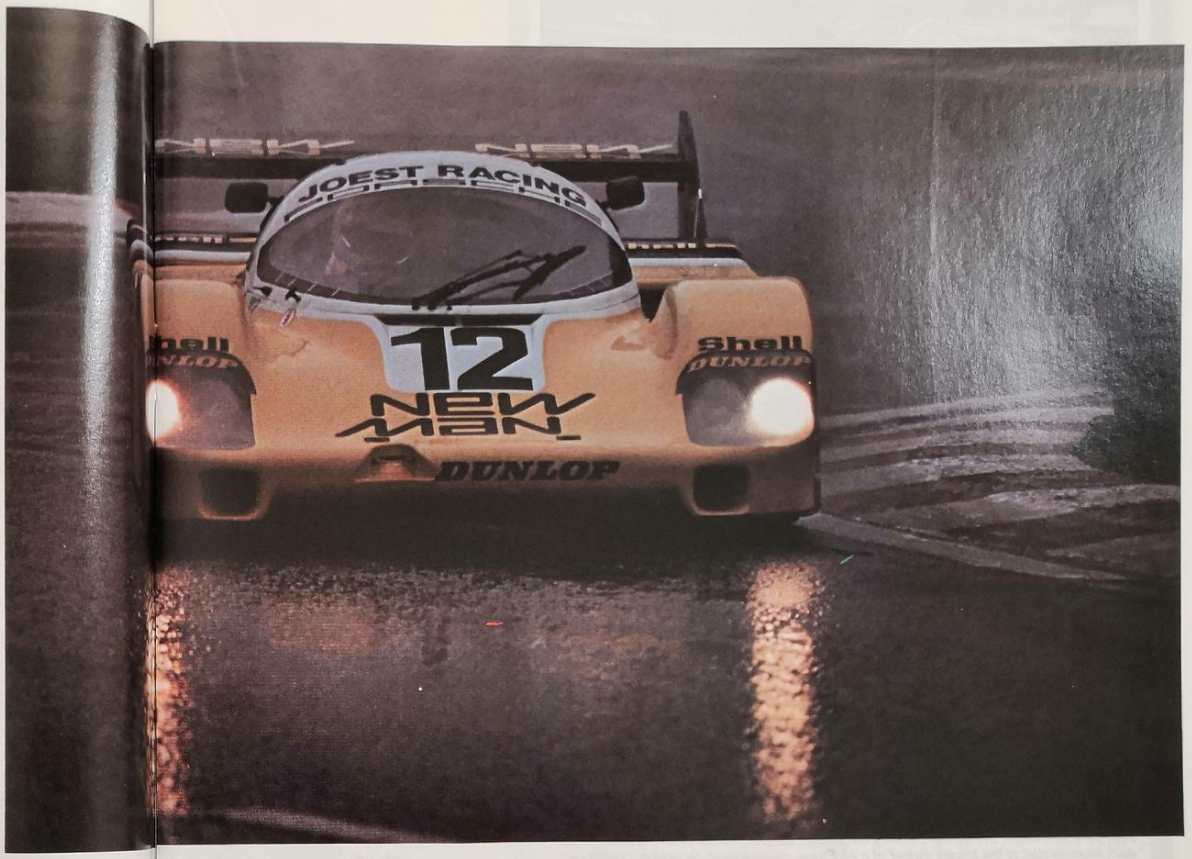


The Kremer-prepared Porsche 956 (21) in the hands of Warwick held 3rd place until its engine failed. Our picture shows Manfred and Erwin Kremer inspecting the damage. Their other car, the no 22 CK5, was crashed during practice by the little-known co-driver of Rothengatter, seen relaxing with Warwick. Wollek (6) is pictured during qualifying, while Gröhs, in helmet, prepares for his turn behind the wheel. Winner of Group B was the BMW M1 (89). (photos: First Line, DPPI & Peter Burn)





Evening draws near under a threatening sky on Saturday as the Porsche 956 of Reinhold Jöst, driven here by Volkert Merl, struggles to stay on the road. This is the car in which Bob Wollek crashed the following day. (photo: Peter Burn)

tactician that he is -- slipped in a stunning 2m 09.30s, an average speed of no less than 120.22 mph. The duel between the two works drivers had been thrilling to watch, especially bearing in mind that none of the drivers could allow himself the slightest margin for error: off-line, the surface was still treacherously damp and even a minor deviation would have resulted in a serious accident. With a lap time less than five seconds slower than Prost's at the Belgian GP, Jacky Ickx was a good 2.3 seconds clear of the fastest of the private Porsches.

Driving splendidly, it was a delighted Derek Warwick who explained the difference between the Boss 956 and the GPI-entered CK5 with which he had made his Group C debut at Le Mans. *"There's really no comparison. The car's better all round, even taking into account the slight understeer which we've got. Brakes, road holding, grip, controllability and everything, it's all an improvement over the CK5."*

Behind Derek came the works Lancia of Patrese/Alboreto, the Fitzpatrick/Hobbs Porsche 956 and the C100-"lookalike" Ford-Zakspeed of Ludwig/Niedzwiedz. Then it was Brun/Gröhs (956), Francia/Barilla (Lancia), Wollek/Johansson (956) -- who hadn't been able to take advantage of the drying track -- Ghinzani/Fabi (Lancia) and Lammers/Boutsen (956), who were in trouble with a down-on-power engine.

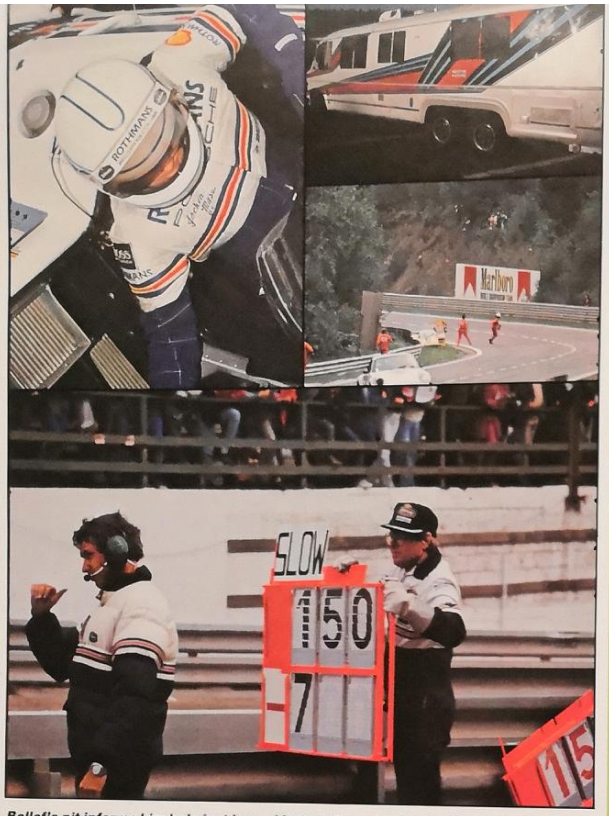
A second qualifying period had been provided for the afternoon, but by lunch time the sky had opened all over again and there was to be no relief from the rain until well after night fall. With the best time in the session logged at 2m 44.29s, it was to be the morning session's times that decided the grid positions. That fast time in the wet was set by the Ford Zakspeed in the hands of Niedzwiedz, who was almost literally flying as he rushed from one corner to the next in a series of terrifying power slides.

When the race started at noon on Sunday (144 laps or six hours, whichever came sooner), there was a strong wind blowing out of a dull grey sky. The track was dry -- and remained so throughout the race -- but the crowd was distinctly thin. It wasn't just the weather which was discouraging the Belgian public, for there was a national rally and an important local cycle race competing for their attention.

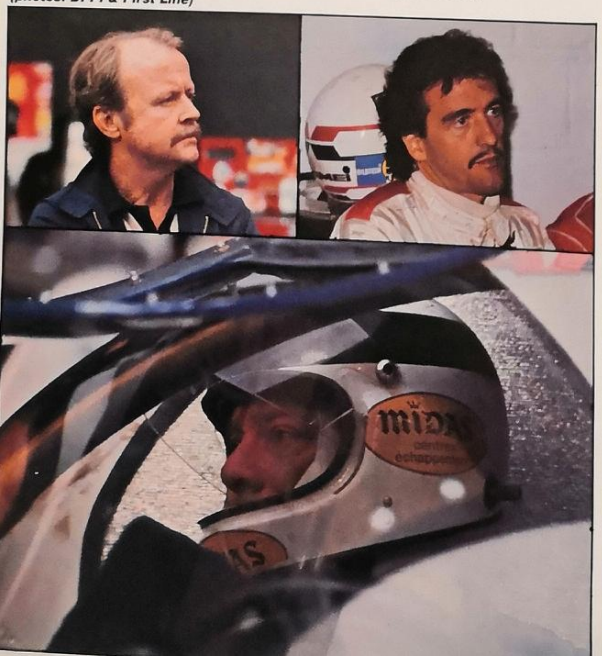
The rolling start got the field safely under way, and as they came into the La Source hairpin for the first time it was Mass and Bellof leading a Rothmans 1-2 in front of a fiercely scrapping bunch comprising Warwick (956), Patrese (Lancia), Ludwig (Ford C1/4), Fitzpatrick (956), Fabi (Lancia), Stuck (956), Barilla (Lancia), Johansson (956) making up time splendidly, Heyer (956), Mallock (Aston Martin), Plankenhorn (956), Jaussaud (Cheetah) and Boutsen (956).

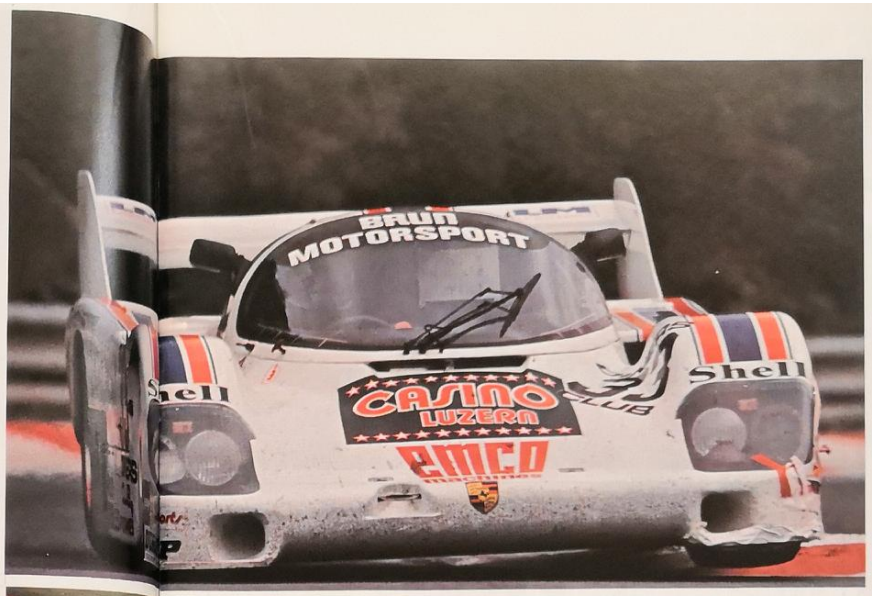
Within two laps the works Porsches had pulled well ahead, and it was a lonely Warwick who was making the best effort at keeping them in sight: behind him there was a fabulous scrap developing between Patrese, Fitzpatrick, Ludwig, Johansson and Stuck. The Cheetah was already in overheating trouble, and made the first of a long series of pit stops which later resulted in its retirement. The five-strong group lost one of its members as they came round to complete five laps, when Fitzpatrick, struggling with an engine which was intermittently misfiring, arrived in the pits for an unscheduled tyre change. But it was still a fine battle, and one awaited the following lap impatiently.

Alas, once Mass, Bellof and Warwick had gone by there was a long wait before Niedzwiedz arrived, all on his own. Patrese and Johansson had disappeared, while Stuck had lost a lot of ground. Eventually the Lancia apeared in the pits, at least a minute late, with a flat rear tyre and part of the rear suspension bent. It had



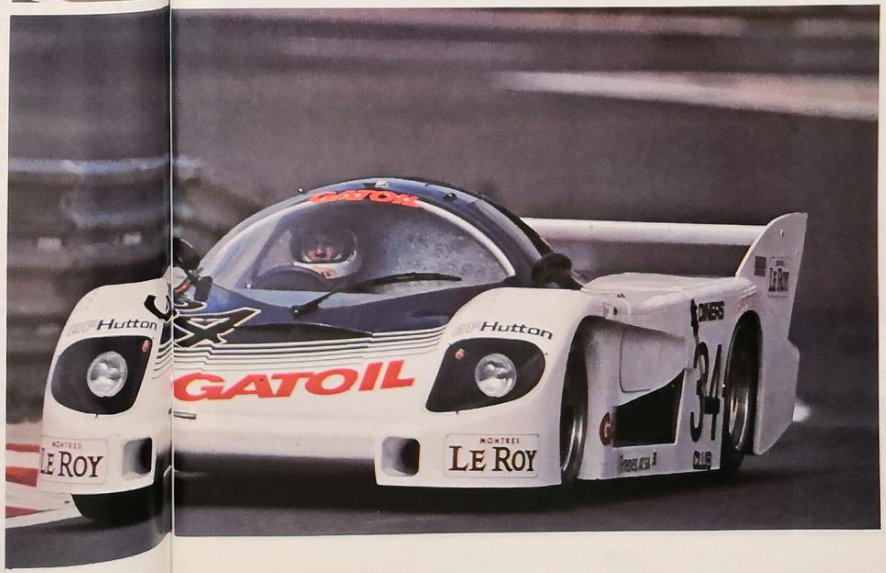
Bellof's pit informs him he's just lapped in 2m 15s and instructs him not try to close up on Ickx: it's a crucial moment in the race, and the Porsche crew had to show him the board five times. Wollek eventually started the race after taking over the second Jöst 956; and Mass, the winner, climbs out of the cockpit. Walter Brun (bottom), with dark moustache, is the happy owner of a 956 now, while Chuck Graemiger, with red moustache, is the designer of the Ford-Cheetah raced by Jaussaud. (photos: DPPI & First Line)





Walter Brun's newly-acquired Porsche 956, bought to replace the ill-fated Sehcars which he had at Le Mans, makes its race debut in the WEC. It gave the Swiss driver 4th place. (photo: DPPI)

In spite of a misfire at the beginning of the race. Fitzpatrick/Hobbs came through to finish 3rd, five laps behind the winning works car. (photo: First Line)



The hastily put-together Ford-Cheetah driven by Jaussaud (seen here), Kessel and Ferrier did not make an auspicious debut. (photo: DPPI)

obviously been in contact with the Johansson 956, which didn't reappear for many more minutes, followed by a cloud of tyre smoke. The front left suspension had been bent in the incident, and although the marshals had helped Stefan to get his car back on to the track, there was no alternative but retirement.

The race had started like a Grand Prix, and it was the GP drivers (Patrese and Johansson) who had put so much effort into fighting each other that one was delayed and the other eliminated. Much of the race's interest had been lost, although for Lancia and for the Jöst team it was obviously an encouragement. Fiorio quickly decided to put Alboreto into the undamaged Lancia and to replace Patrese with Fabi in the other. Wollek, whose championship chances would otherwise have gone up literally in smoke, was switched to the second Jöst 956, the "New Man" car of Heyer/Merl, while Schornstein was put into the ancient 936J.

By the time the first fuel stops were due, the two leading works cars had changed places, but they were soon back to "normal." Before half distance there was a brief period of interest when Bellof, who had taken the fourth stint, made a strong come-back move which had his crew waving "Slow" signs at him.

Most unfortunately both the Warwick/Konrad 956 and the Ford Zakspeed failed to survive past the end of the second hour, being forced to retire with engine damage and a faulty gearbox linkage respectively. Thus Brun/Stuck/Gröhs took over third place ahead of the rapidly-recovering Fitzpatrick/Hobbs. Lancia, meanwhile, suffered the misfortune of having a second incident involving Patrese (who lost even more time), while the Fabi/Ghinzani entry was in electrical touble.

It was nevertheless a big surprise to see the private Mirabella Lancia entry, very well driven by Francia/Barilla, completely eclipsing the works cars. By the end of the race it was holding a strong fourth place, behind "Fitz" and ahead of Brun, whose new 956 had been delayed by an accident which damaged its bodywork and resulted in a serious loss of aerodynamic downforce.

The end of the race would have been much less interesting if it hadn't been for three major incidents in the final two hours. Having pulled the Heyer/Merl 956 through to 7th place, Wollek went off the road in a big accident caused by some sort of mechanical failure; the Aston Martin, normally so reliable, had engine failure; and the courageous Francia/Barilla pair broke a universal joint in their Lancia's transmission. After a lot of trouble getting the engine restarted because of battery problems, they managed to complete the last lap (as required by the rules), but by the time the car crossed the line they had lost their splendid 4th place and were classified 6th.

After the early retirement of the Giannini-Alba in Group C "Junior" it was the Mazda/Harrier which won the under-supported category. Far more interesting was the battle for Group B honours. In this the BMW M1 of Winther/Mercer -- helped out on this occasion by "strong man" Frank Jelinski (another of GPI's drivers at Le Mans) -- took an impressive victory.

1000 KM OF SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS

Round 5 of World Endurance Championship (Drivers and Makes).
Date : 4 September 1983.
Official title : 1000 km Spa '83 - Trophee Diners Club.
Race distance : 144 laps of 6.95 km (4.32 mile) circuit; for a total of 1000.37 kms (621.62 miles).
Weather : Friday fine ; Saturday rainy ; Sunday overcast and dry.
Race attendance : 25.000.

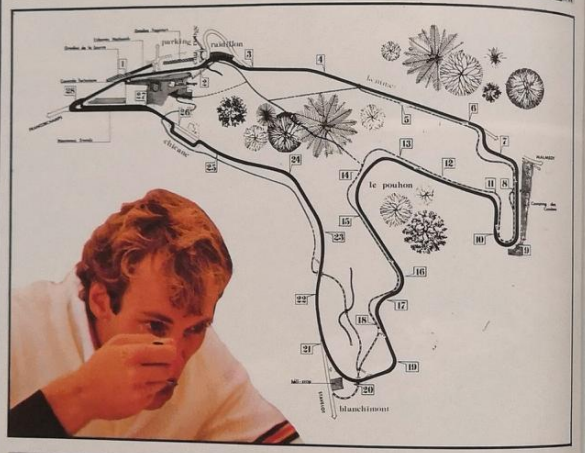
STARTING GRID

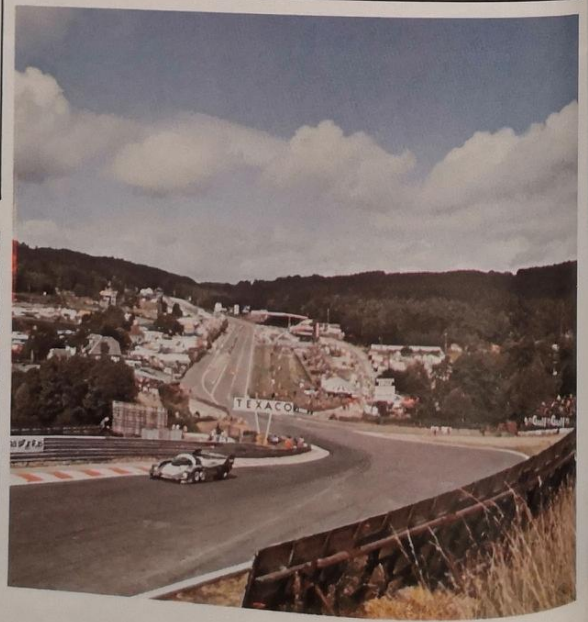
1. **Porsche Ickx/Mass 2m09.30s**
2. Porsche 956 Bell/Bellof 2m10.19s
21. Porsche 956 Warwick/Konrad 2m12.60s
4. Lancia LC/2 Patrese/Alboreto **(1)** 2m14.05s
11. Porsche 956 Fitzpatrick/Hobbs 2m14.63s
43. Ford Zakspeed C1/4 Ludwig/Niedzwiedz 2m16.98s
33. Porsche 956 Brun/Stuck/Gröhs 2m17.07s
6. Lancia LC/2 Francia/Barilla 2m17.67s
8. Porsche 956 Wollek/Johansson 2m17.82s
5. Lancia LC/2 Ghinzani/Fabi **(2)** 2m17.93s
14. Porsche 956 Lammers/Boutsen 2m19.60s
12. Porsche 956 Heyer/Merl/Schornstein **(3)** 2m19.84s
18. Porsche 956 Lässig/Plankenhorn/Regout 2m20.98s
39. Aston Martin Nimrod Mallock/Salmon 2m23.92s
22. Porsche Kremer CK5 **(4)** Kroesemeijer/Rothengather 2m25.74s
56. BMW URD Sotty/Cuynet/Bertapelle 2m30.52s
34. Ford Cheetah G603 Kessel/Ferrier/Jaussaud 2m31.79s
63. Giannini Alba Finotto/Facetti 2m32.54s
57. Porsche URD Kannacher/Lechner/Boller 2m35.09s
15. Porsche 936J Schornstein/Winter/Martin 2m37.91s
89. BMW M1 Winther/Mercer/Jelinski 2m42.54s
62. Mazda Harrier Baker/D. Palmer 2m43.12s
93. Porsche 930 Cooper/Smith/Ovey 2m49.13s
90. BMW M1 Jürgensen/Gall/Dören 2m53.25s
92. Porsche 930 Memminger/Kuhn Weiss 2m56.98s
98. Porsche 930 Reuter/Hueweller/Beilcke 3m01.01s
97. Porsche 928S Probst/Mentel/Haug 3m03.51s
91. Porsche 930 Hamelmann/Yvon 3m11.73s
96. Porsche 930 Lateste/Bienvault 3m24.72s

(1) Driven in the race by Patrese/Fabi.
(2) Driven in the race by Ghinzani/Fabi/Alboreto.
(3) In the race Wollek replaced Schornstein, who switched to the no 15 Porsche 936J, which he had also qualified.
(4) Non-starter following Kroesemeijer's accident on Saturday afternoon.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1966 : Mike Parkes-Lodovico Scarfiotti/Ferrari 330 P3
1967 : Jacky Ickx-Dick Thompson/Mirage Ford
1968 : Jacky Ickx-Brian Redman/Ford GT40
1969 : Joseph Siffert-Brian Redman/Porsche 908/3
1970 : Joseph Siffert-Brian Redman/Porsche 917
1971 : Pedro Rodriguez-Jackie Oliver/Porsche 917
1972 : Brian Redman-Arturo Merzario/Ferrari 312P
1973 : Derek Bell-Mike Hailwood/Mirage Ford
1974 : Jacky Ickx-Jean Pierre Jarier/Matra Simca MS670
1975 : Henri Pescarolo-Derek Bell/Alfa Romeo 33TT12
1982 : Jacky Ickx-Jochen Mass/Porsche 956





RESULT

1. Porsche 956 (Ickx/Mass), 144 laps, 1000.368 km, (621.62 miles) in 5 h 44m 33.52s, 174.250 km/h (108.28 mph).

2. Porsche 956	Bell/Bellof	à 1m03.01s behind
3. Porsche 956	Fitzpatrick/Hobbs	139 laps
4. Porsche 956	Brun/Stuck/Gröhs	138 laps
5. Porsche 956	Lässig/Plankenhorn/Regout	136 laps
6. Lancia LC/2	Francia/Barilla	134 laps
7. Lancia LC/2	Patrese/Fabi **(1)**	132 laps
8. Porsche 936J	Schronstein/Winter/Martin	127 laps
9. Porsche 956	Lammers/Boutsen	127 laps
10. BMW-URD	Sotty/Cuynet/Bertapelle	121 laps
11. Lancia LC/2	Ghinzani/Fabi/Alboreto**(2)**	118 laps
12. BMW M1	Winther/Mercer/Jelinski	118 laps
13. Porsche 930	Cooper/Smith/Ovey	111 laps
14. Mazda Harrier	Baker/D. Palmer	109 laps
Aston Martin Nimrob	Mallock/Salmon	109 DNF (engine)
15. Porsche 930	Hamelmann/Yvon	107 laps
16. Porsche 930	Reuter/Hueweller/Beilcke	106 laps
Porsche 956	Heyer/Merl/Wollek **(3)**	90 laps/retired, off road
Porsche 956	Warwick/Konrad	45 laps/retired, engine
Porsche 930	Memminger/Kuhn Weiss	44 laps/retired, lost wheel
Ford Zakspeed C1/4	Ludwig/Niedzwiedz	30 laps/retired, gearbox linkage
Ford Cheetah G603	Kessel/Ferrier/Jaussaud	26 laps/retired, engine
BMW M1	Jürgensen/Gall/Doren	20 laps/retired, broken suspension
Giannini Alba	Finotto/Facetti	16 laps/retired, engine
Porsche 928S	Probst/Mentel/Haug	13 laps/retired, engine
Porsche 956	Wollek/Johansson	6 laps/retired, collision and suspension
Porsche URD	Kannacher/Lechner/Boller	0 laps/retired, gearbox

(1) Fabi, having completed the first stint in Lancia LC/2 no 5, was switched to Patrese's car, taking Alboreto's place.
(2) Alboreto, who was to have shared Lancia LC/2 no 4 with Patrese, took over from Fabi in this car to support Ghinzani.
(3) Following the retirement of Porsche 956 No 8, Wollek switched to this car in place of Schornstein, who had also qualified the Porsche 936J No 15: it was the latter car which he drove in the race.

NB : The Porsche 930 of Lateste-Bienvault did not qualify, having spent two hours in the pits.

LAP LEADERS

Laps 1 to 16 : Porsche 956 (Ickx-Mass)
Laps 17 to 22 : Porsche 956 (Bell/Bellof)
Laps 23 to 25 : Porsche 956 (Ickx/Mass)
Laps 26 to 82 : Porsche 956 (Bell/Bellof)
Laps 83 to 144 : Porsche 956 (Ickx/Mass)

Fastest lap : Bellof (Porsche 956) on lap 105 in 2m 14.11s (115.91 mph, 186,536 km/h).
Group C winner : Porsche 956 (Ickx-Mass).
Group C Junior : Mazda Harrier (Baker-D. Palmer).
Group B : BMW M1 (Winther-Mercer-Jelinski).

WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP (MAKES)

1. Porsche, 84 pts. **2.** Lancia, 17 pts. **3.** Aston Martin, 4 pts. **4.** Giannini Alba, BMW and BMW-Sauber, 2 pts. **7.** BMW-URD, 1 pt.

WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP (DRIVERS)

1. Ickx, 70 pts. **2.** Wollek, 56 pts. **3.** Mass, 55 pts. **4.** Bell, 54 pts. **5.** Lässig and Plankenhorn, 42 pts. **7.** Fitzpatrick, 37 pts. **8.** Johansson, 36 pts. **9.** Bellof and Lammers, 35 pts. **11.** Boutsen, 34 pts. **12.** Hobbs, 29 pts. **13.** Schuppan, 28 pts. **14.** Holbert, 24 pts. **15.** Heyer and Schickentanz, 22 pts. **17.** Haywood and Gröhs, 20 pts. **19.** Palmer, 15 pts. **20.** Rosberg, Stommelen, Mario Andretti, Michael Andretti and Alliot, 12 pts. **25.** Dören, 11 pts. **26.** Brun, Stuck, Barth, Merle De Narvaez, 10 pts. **31.** Lloyd, 9 pts. **32.** Jones, Sigala, Larrauri, Edwards, Keegan and Regout, 8 pts. **38.** Hamelmann and Gall, 7 pts. **48.** Needell, Dron, Cleare, Ludwig, Utz, haldi, Francia, Barilla and Patrese, 6 pts. **49.** Mallock, Salmon, Finotto, Facetti, Winther, Mercer, Braun, Jürgensen, Memminger, Kuhn Weiss, Steckkönig, Wilson and Fabi, 4 pts. **62.** Truffo, Sigala, Schornstein, Martin and Winter, 3 pts. **67.** Alboreto, Garcia, Naon and Montoya, 2 pts. **71.** Henn, Ballot Lena, Schlesser, Sotty, Cuynet and Bertapelle, 1 pt.

SPA 4.9.83 '83 WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

EXTRA, EXTRA

ADVANTAGE THE OLD BUDDIES

From the paddock you can just see him. He's up there, by the barrier, between the chicane and the deserted F1 pits. Binoculars would surely reveal a defeated look on the familiar face: he's walking briskly, though not hurriedly, and his blue eyes gaze at the ground while his helmet dangles uselessly from the strap clasped in his hand.
Bob Wollek, who came here with a narrow lead in the WEC drivers' championship, has just gone off the road in a violent accident. The loudspeakers confirm the fact, and it doesn't take a lot of imagination to visualise the black and yellow Jöst Racing 956 -- which he had taken over from Hans Heyer and Volkert Merl -- stuffed somewhere into a barrier as Wollek manhandled it into 7th place.

Back in the pits, Jöst and his mechanics swarm round: they've already been waiting for his news for several minutes. When Bob does open his mouth, his first words are a request for a smoke, the condemned man's cigarette for someone who has evidently escaped execution of sentence.

"I was in the second part of Carrières, a very quick left-hand corner which is taken virtually flat out," he explained. *"You lift off, turn in, and then get back on the power, hard. Everything was fine for the first three-quarters of the turn, and then the steering suddenly went light. The car ran head-on into the guardrail: fortunately it's pretty close to the track at that point because the first impact was only a glancing blow. I must have been doing around 150 mph when I hit it: the car just slid and slid until it came to a stop at the little right-hander just before the chicane..."*

Just over two hours later, Jacky Ickx crossed the line to win the Spa 1000 kms and take over the WEC drivers' championship lead from Wollek. It was hardly an unexpected development, and Wollek had been saying as much throughout the meeting. The Frenchman's attitude is not a loser's, very much the contrary, and it's well known for him to threaten that he'll "blow off" one or another of his rivals. But here in the Ardennes forest he seems to have succumbed to a morose enjoyment of his situation.

"Do you want to know what chance I had of winning the world championship this year? I'll tell you: exactly zero per cent! Zero per cent because there's absolutely nothing which a private team can do against the factory in this game. We made ourselves look pretty good at Monza, when we took the wind out of their sails, and they reacted fantastically quickly. It doesn't matter what sort of experience or ability Reinhold has: he simply can't match the finance and the technology which Porsche puts into the Rothmans cars for Ickx/Mass and Bell/Bellof. We just stagnate while they get all the advantages of an incredible research and development programme..."

After the accident, Bob was as pragmatic as ever: *"Look, I was right when I told you that I would lose the championship here. It doesn't matter whether it's because our car isn't as good as theirs are, or whether it's caused by an accident: the result's still the same..."*

In an attempt to give him a little moral support, and perhaps to keep his hopes alive, he was transferred by Jöst into the Heyer/Merl 956. *"It wasn't as quick as mine, it was less economical, and the engine wasn't as good. Perhaps the handling was a bit better, because it didn't understeer like mine did."* The strategy didn't work.

Stefan Johansson had taken first stint in their regular red and white Marlboro 956: right from the start he had got himself mixed up in a battle for third place which also involved Riccardo Patrese, Klaus Ludwig and Hans Stuck. In this electric atmosphere an accident could have happened at any time, and when it did it was the young Swede who paid most dearly. Coming through from a place well back on the grid, he was so well wound up that he didn't hesitate to try a pass on Patrese under braking for the tight downhill right-hander called Bruxelles. Stefan had the inside line, slightly behind, and Riccardo turned in to take the corner before he did. The Lancia forced the Porsche to move over into the dirt, then they touched. Italian damage report: punctured left rear tyre, bent suspension and four laps in the pits for repairs. Swedish damage report: broken left front suspension and retirement, but only after a long wait as the would-be world champion's co-driver struggled to bring the wreck back for investigation.

For more than a quarter of an hour, Johansson stood in the pit, stretched out flat against the concrete wall, head in hands. The normally well-ordered blond hair was in complete disarray. He clearly didn't want to talk about what had happened, and his tired expression suggested he'd just covered a full race distance, not a mere five laps or so. Was he angry with himself or with Patrese? The answer came when he stepped forward to explain to Wollek, who was sitting just in front of him, on a tyre.

"I was miles faster than the Lancia, but Patrese was taking the straights in a series of zig-zags to stop me from passing him. When we got to the right-hander, it was me on the inside line. But he just moved slowly over on me and closed the door, pushing me over the kerb and into the sand: we touched and I just spun off. I honestly can't believe that something like that has happened to me. Dammit, this is an endurance race and we were only on lap six. What did he want to do that for?"

Perhaps in order to show his frustration, Stefan offered a hand to Wollek, who had listed calmly to the explanation. *"I'm sorry,"* said Stefan in the sincere but humbled tones of a man who knows that he's betrayed the confidence placed in his professional ability.
A few minutes after one o'clock, when a sweaty-looking Riccardo Patrese removed his helmet after handing over to Teo Fabi, standing outside the Lancia pit were Bob Wollek and Domingos Piedade, team manager of Jöst Racing. After a quick discussion with Cesare Fiorio, the Italian driver had to turn and face Piedade, who had taken a couple of steps forward to make his presence felt. His explanation -- helped along with some unmistakeable hand gestures -- was entirely different from Johansson's.

"He tried to take me on the right-left at the top of the hill, then he went inside me two corners later and tried to take me off," said Riccardo.

Hands in pockets, calmly chewing gum like a certain Texan, Bob ostensibly held back. On his face was the little detached smile of commiseration which is sometimes confused with a desire to be remote and unapproachable. It was clear what that he had no intention of getting mixed up in a useless conversation with Patrese. *"Ask him about the zig-zags on the straight,"* he whispered to Piedade, *"and then about the thing at the Nürburgring. Just now, while they were fixing his car, he said it was the second time this year that he's had a problem with us. I want to hear him say that this time it wasn't my fault..."*

Practical as always, and wishing to make the situation clear all round, Bob then explained. *"At the Nürburgring, we both started on wets. In the quick left before Flugplatz he hesitated for a moment, and I found myself inside him. I was very, very quick there, but because he sits on the right side of the car maybe he didn't see me, and he came up the back of me."*
That time it was Wollek driving. He knew exactly what had happened. It wasn't the same at Spa, but here he didn't seem overly worried about tracing exactly wheteher it was Patrese or Johansson who had been at fault. *"When one car is damaged in front and the other behind, which driver do you reckon is at fault?"* said Patrese later.

In Wollek's mind there was no real doubt about the responsibility here, but a man with his reputation and attitude doesn't let it out for all to hear. To hear him talk; Grand Prix drivers are fantastically talented people but also liable to errors of judgment which make their behaviour somewhat erratic.

"It's been proved once again that in endurance racing it's the old jam jars which make the best jam." But even by studying his eyes closely, it was impossible to guess which role had been played by the oldest jam jar...

Didier Braillon

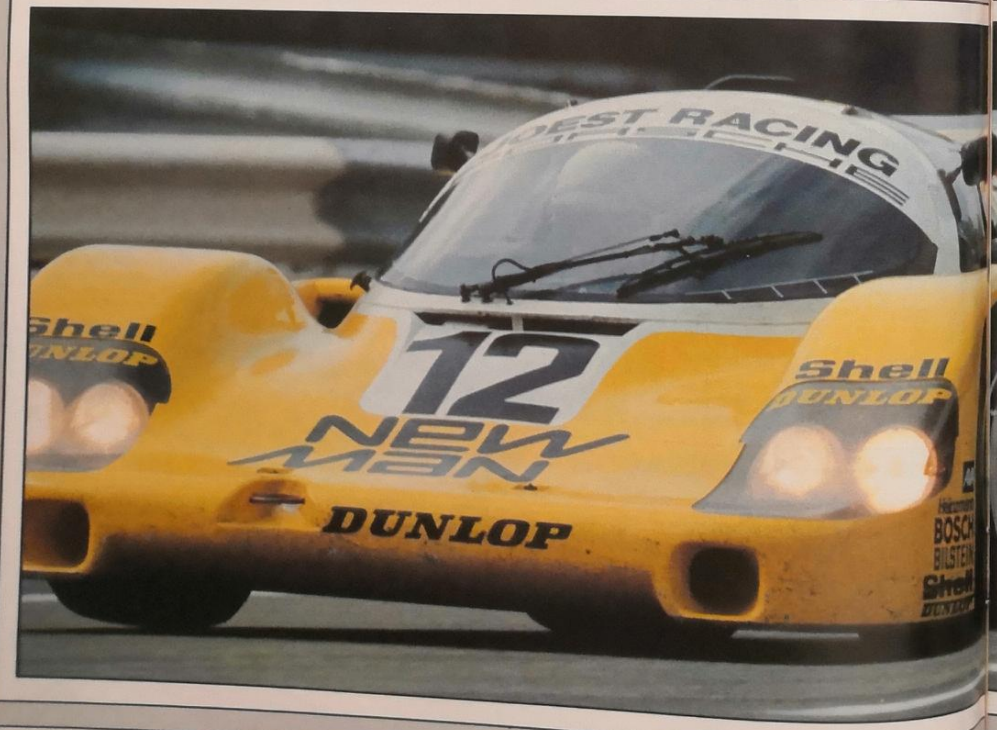
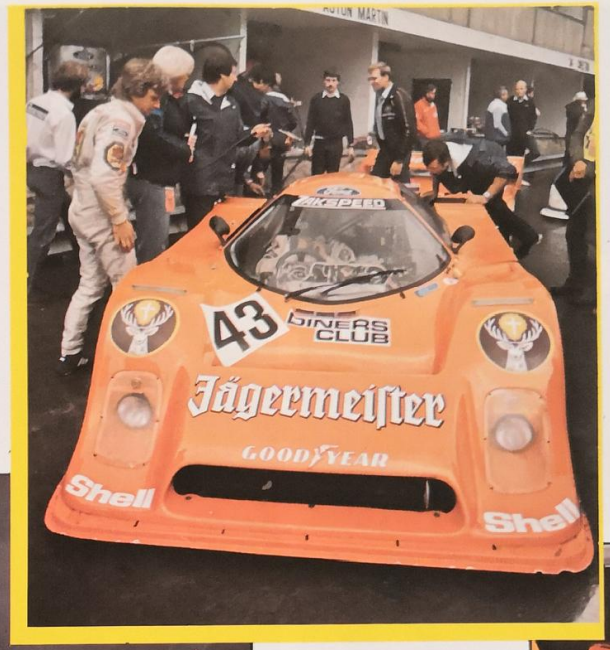


Photo Didier Braillon

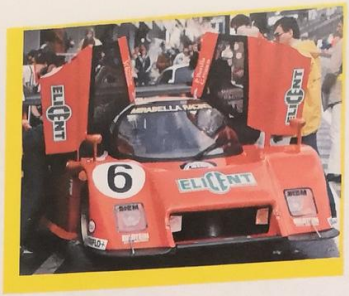
BUCKING TURBO

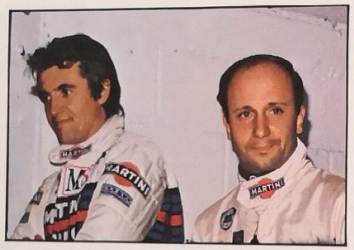
It's a tiring job to keep a turbo-engined car under control, and the effort of having mastered the Ford Zakspeed C1/4 at Spa shows clearly in the lines on the face of Klaus Ludwig. More usually seen in the DRM (German championship) rounds, this fascinating car — prepared by



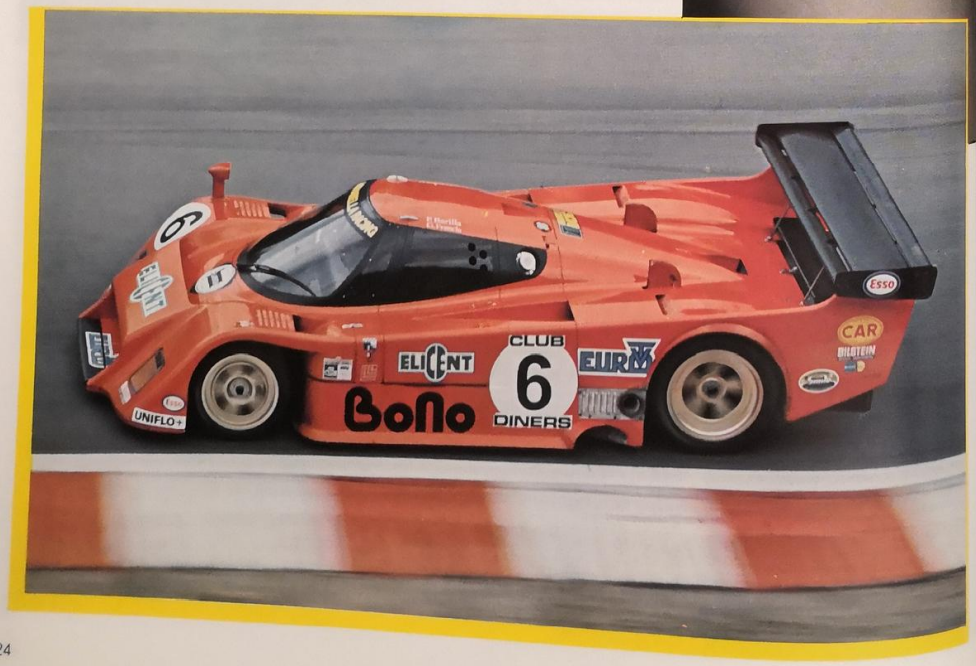
Erich Zakowski — is one of only two C100 coupés which managed to "escape" from Ford's workshops after the sudden decision to pull out of endurance racing in March this year. Developed from last year's C100s, the C1/4 has since been fitted with a Zakspeed-prepared 1.4-litre four-cylinder turbo engine, a powerful device which needs an enormous amount of skill to control when its 550 horses are suddenly released. In the Saturday afternoon practice session before the Spa 1000 Kms, dashing from kerb to kerb in alarming slides, Klaus Ludwig and Klaus Niedzwiedz were able to set what was to be the fastest time, despite the heavy rain. They had got the better of nine Porsche 956s and three Lancias, only to be let down on Sunday after 30 laps of the race by a broken gearbox linkage...
(photos: Peter Burn, Strebelle/First Line & Vargiolu/DPPI)

THE RED RABBIT





Looking oh-so-Italian in its red paint, it's entered by the Mirabella team for a pair of outwardly dissimilar drivers, veteran Giorgio Francia and the promising F2 youngster Paulo Barilla. Yet the privately owned Lancia LC/2 was clearly quicker than the two works cars during the Spa 1000Kms, and it looked as though nothing would stop it from going on to take 4th place overall in the race until a drive shaft failure only a few laps from the end. There was a bitter pill to swallow on Sunday for the official drivers recruited by Lancia from the ranks of F1 and Indy-car racing.



Michele Alboreto/Riccardo Patrese (top) and Piercarlo Ghinzani/Teo Fabi (below) had a big disappointment awaiting them on Sunday after the collision between Patrese and Johansson forced team manager Cesare Fiorio to switch Fabi and Alboreto. This ruse didn't work as planned, however, for the super looking Italian cars with their Ferrari-designed V8 engines were disappointingly slow compared to the best works and privately entered Porsche 956s.

(photos : Strebelle/First Line & Vargiolu/DPPI)

INFILTRATION?

Once again the endurance championship organised by IMSA, the independent club with its own set of rules to rival those of FISA, required its faithful competitors to undertake a marathon tour of North America. There is a calendar of no fewer than 17 races in 10 months, but with three rounds still to go Al Holbert has got the title wrapped up. His success demonstrates not only the qualities of his March coupé, but also the cunning tactics adopted this season by Porsche.

by Didier Braillon

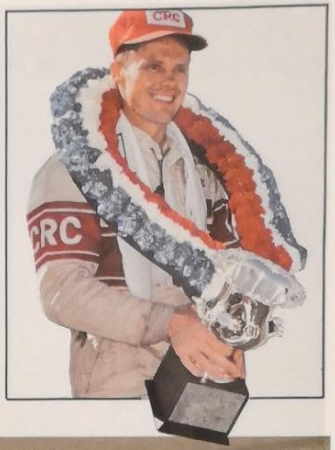
The ageing Porsche 935 could have won a few more races this year, but any such victories would have been attributable more to its reliability than its outright speed. With the exception of the long distance events like the Daytona 24 Hours or the Sebring 12 Hours it was obvious that the 935 would have been outclassed by the lighter, more sophisticated coupés built to IMSA's own GTP class, which is similar to (but not compatible with) our own European Group C. Thus it was that the Porsche factory tried to have its unbeatable 956 accepted by IMSA.

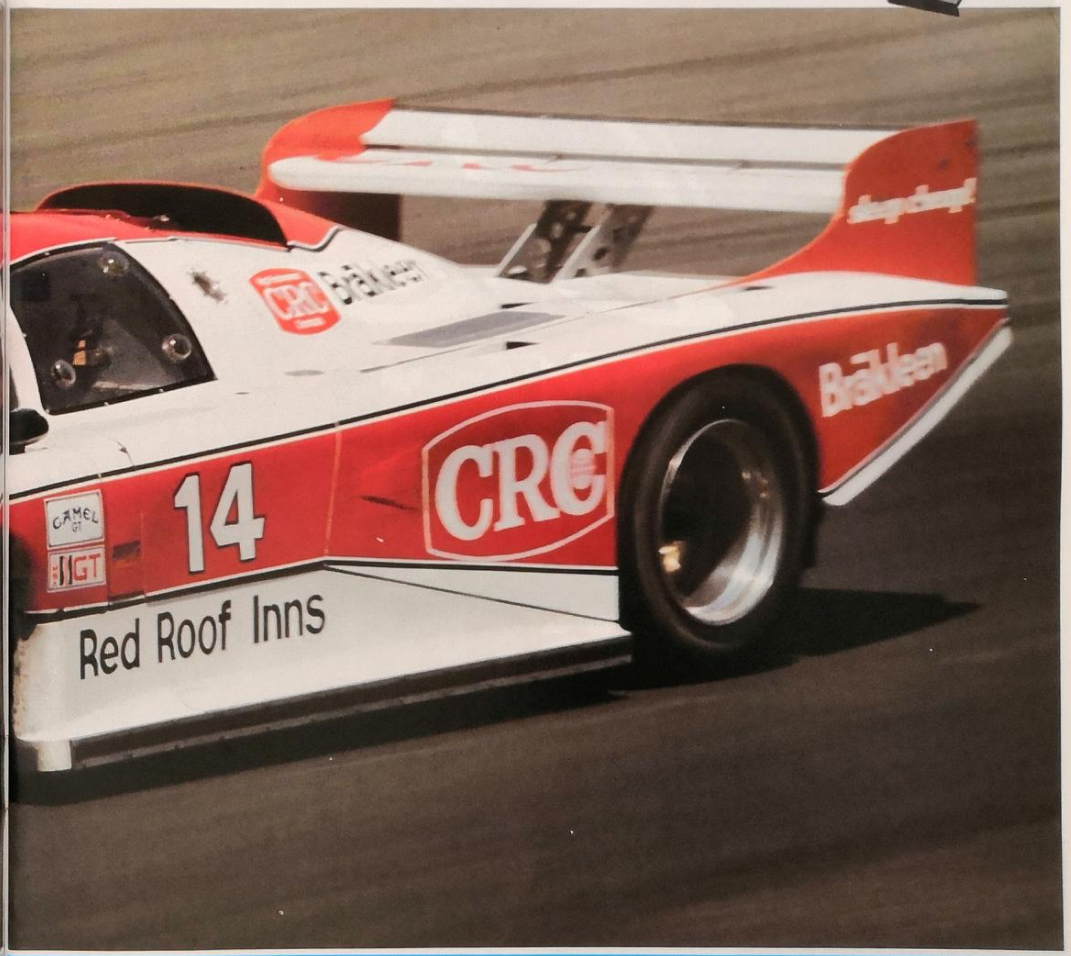
For political reasons, however, IMSA boss John Bishop refused the request after many weeks of discussion. The 956 was rejected for a number of reasons, among them IMSA's determination to give American constructors a chance and to prevent any possibility of the GTP class going into a spiral of technical and financial complications. The IMSA President is equally concerned about driver safety, which he says is not as good as it should be on the 956 under the Group C rules: the GTP rules set strict standards of frontal protection which are not met by last year's champion design. Finally, in an attempt to discourage Porsche altogether, IMSA decided to forbid twin turbochargers on what the GTP rules describe as "racing" engines, *ie* those which are not production-based, or produced only in small runs like the Stuttgart-built flat-six.

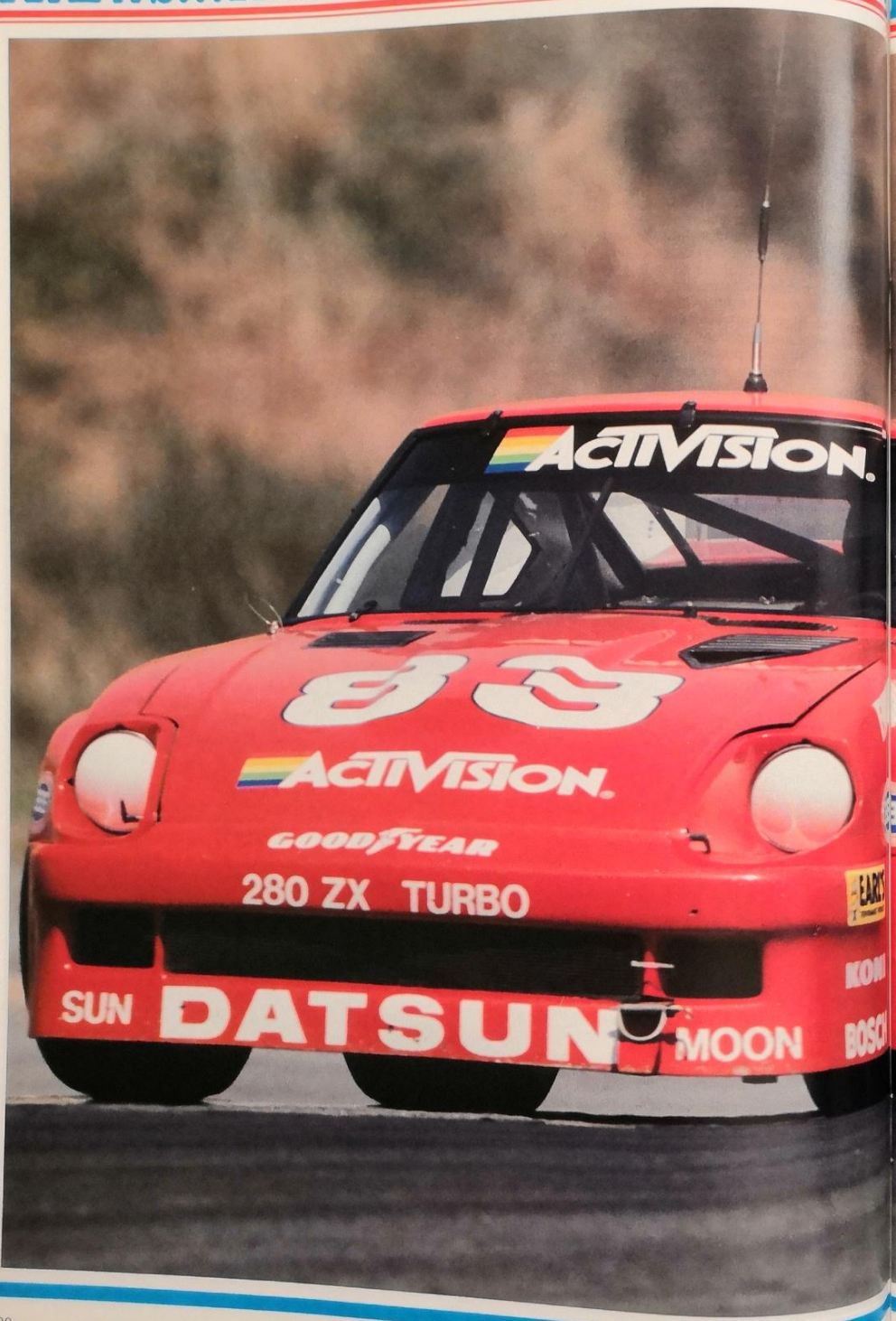
The racing management at Porsche reacted fast. In view of the considerable number of Porsche road cars exported to the USA, the company felt that it was vital to be represented in the well-publicised IMSA championship. Having been shown the door by Mr Bishop, therefore, the Germans decided to come back through the window...

An agreement was quickly reached with March Engineering, whose 83G complied perfectly with the IMSA rules, to run a works-backed car in the series, using a version of the 2.6-litre engine specially adapted to the single turbo requirements. The co-operation between Bicester and Stuttgart culminated, at the end of May, in the first race for the March 83G-Porsche. Entered by Holbert Racing, and wearing the livery of CRC chemicals, the works car replaced the Chevrolet V8-engined 83G which the team had been racing until then. The driver was the experienced Pennsylvanian Al Holbert, himself the son of former SCCA champion Bob Holbert, who had raced works Porsches and AC Cobras back in the early '60s.

The combination was an instant success. By mid-summer Holbert was firmly headed for the IMSA title, repeating his successes of 1976 and 1977. There could be no finer tribute to the ability of the Ger-







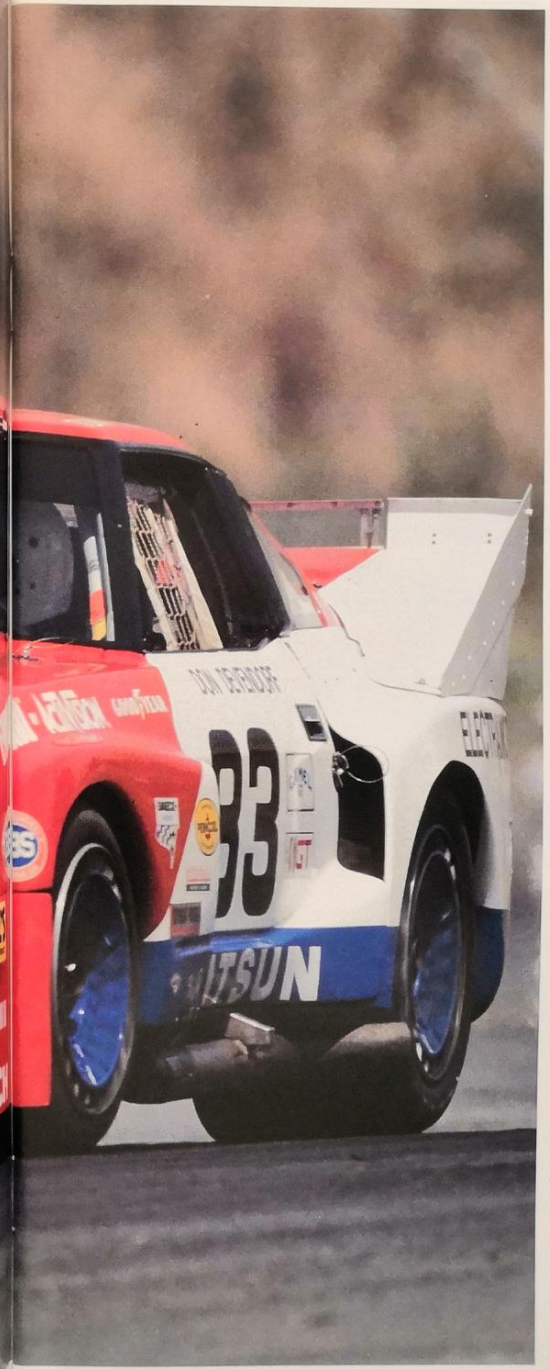


Photo spread (previous pages): Al Holbert had the IMSA title sewn up well before the end of the season, thanks in no small measure to his unbeatable Porsche-engined March 83G. (photo: Blakemore)

The Electramotive Racing Datsun ZX turbo driven by Don Devendorf and Tony Adamowicz: in the Portland race it took a fine 3rd place overall.

Following page: A fine shot of the beautifully turned-out Jaguar XJR5, overall winner at Lime Rock and Mosport. (photo: Blakemore)

mans to respond quickly and efficiently to the shift in rules.

An entirely different car which has been equally impressive this year is the fabulous Jaguar XJR5, which uses a comparatively mildly tuned version of the Coventry firm's big "atmospheric" V12. Designed by Lee Dykstra (who was responsible three years ago for Holbert's successful CRC Can-Am car), it is built by Group 44, an experienced group of professional American racers who have long been associated with BL products and who, this year, have been given direct support from the Jaguar factory. Group 44's traditionally high standards of preparation, together with the car's careful design, have enabled the Jaguar to win several races, often vanquishing turbo-engined GTPs with at least 100 horsepower superiority. The various rival cars, most of which are Chevy-engined March 83Gs or Lola T600s, don't have a serious chance of winning these races.

In the lower classes, GTO (GT over 2.5-litres) and GTU (GT under 2.5-litres), it is the GTO which is currently the more interesting. The GTU division has consisted almost exclusively of noisy privately-entered Mazda RX7s since the withdrawal of the impressive-looking Toyota Celicas prepared in Santa Ana by Dan Gurney's All American Racers. Officially, the reason was that Toyota considered that "all objectives have been achieved," although it must be noted that the cars — while quick — were not particularly reliable.

The GTO division, by contrast, has been thrilling spectators for several months. Adding to the interest has been the arrival on the scene of Electramotive Racing's Datsun ZX280 Turbo, which carries the colours of Activision video games. It's terrifically powerful for a turbo, and there is a still a problem with the throttle lag which makes accelerating a sudden and not very predictable process. With two good drivers in Don Devendorf (unknown outside the US) and the popular Tony "A to Z" Adamowicz (a veteran of F5000 and Can-Am's glorious days), it is even able to challenge some of the GTPs, including the Porsche 934 which scored a surprise victory at Sebring, and the spectacular Camaro of the Stratagraph team (remember them at Le Mans in '82?).

The most exciting news of all, however, is the official return to long distance racing of the Ford factory with its front-engined GTP Mustangs. The Mustang's name may be familiar, but this is a no-compromise racing car built by Ford's own SVO division, using the most advanced aerospace techniques. It is being entered in the last few IMSA races so that it can be ready for next year's championship, and in fact it pulled off a win at Road America (Elkhart Lake), its first race, when the flag came out early because of torrential rain. Because of the significance of this new turbocharged Ford we have decided to bring our IMSA coverage to a halt at the previous round, Mosport, in this issue.

In GPI's next Group C magazine we promise to bring you in-depth coverage of the Mustang's technical features, together with reports of its performances in the final three IMSA rounds. □

CHARLOTTE 500 KM

Round 7 of the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) Camel GT Championship.
Date : 15 May 1983.
Official title : Charlotte Motor Speedway Camel GT 500.
Race distance : 500 km. (136 laps).

STARTING GRID

March 83G-Porsche Holbert/Trueman
March 83G-Chevrolet D. Whittington/Lanier
Phoenix Gunn JG1-Chevrolet Gunn/Olson
Porsche 935K3 Akin/O'Steen
Porsche 935K3 Speer/Madren
Mazda RX7 Knoop/Morton
Toyota Celica AAR Hayje/Dallenbach Jr
BMW M1 Beilcke/Rauh
Toyota Celica AAR Aase/Moreno
Chevrolet Corvette Frink/Hinchcliff
(etc: 48 cars practised)

Jaguar XJR5 Tullius/Adam
March 83G-Porsche Moretti/Van der Merwe
March 82G-Porsche Cowart/Miller
Porsche 934 Baker/Mullen
Chevrolet Camaro Murray/Doyle
Porsche 934 Vincentz/White
BMW M1 Montoya/Fomfor
Porsche 924 GTR Gregg/Rude
Mazda RX7 Mandeville/Johnson
Mazda RX7 Varde/Baldwin

CLASSEMENT

1.	March 83G-Porsche	Holbert/Trueman	138 laps
2.	March 82G-Porsche	Cowart/Miller	136 laps
3.	Jaguar XJR5	Tullius/Adam	135 laps
4.	Porsche 935K3	Speer/Madren	134 laps
5.	Porsche 934	Baker/Mullen	133 laps
6.	BMW M1	Montoya/Fomfor	133 laps
7.	Mazda RX7	Knoop/Morton	132 laps
8.	Porsche 934	Vincentz/White	132 laps
9.	Toyota Celica	Hayje/Dallenbach Jr	130 laps
10.	Mazda RX7	Downing/Maffucci	130 laps
(etc.)			

MAIN POINTS

• First outing (and first victory) for the semi-official works March 83G with its flat-6 single-turbo Porsche engine : Holbert and Trueman still have their Chevy-engined March 83G, which is now used only as a spare. • Victory in the GTO class for the Porsche 934 of Baker and Mullen, winners at Sebring. • Victory in the GTU class for the works Toyota of Hayje and Dallenbach Jr, prepared by Dan Gurney's All American Racers outfit in Santa Ana : Hayje is the Dutch driver who took part in several world championship GPs in1977 with a works Ensign.

LIME ROCK 500 KMS

Round 8 of the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) Camel GT Championship.
Date : 30 May 1983.
Official title : Coca Cola 500 Camel GT 3 hours at Lime Rock Park.
Race distance : 500 km or 3 hours - whichever comes first.

STARTING GRID

March 83G-Chevrolet Haywood/Donaldson
D. Whittington
March 83G-Porsche Moretti/Wilson
Datsun ZX turbo Devendorf/Adamowicz
Mazda GTP Honegger/Bohren
Porsche 934 Baker/Mullen
Ford Mustang Jenner/Bauer
Toyota Celica AAR Aase/Moreno
March 82G-Porsche Cowart/Miller
Chevrolet Camaro Hagan/Felton
BMW M1 Montoya
(etc: 37 cars practised)

March 83G-Porsche Holbert/Bundy
Jaguar XJR5 Tullius Adam
Porsche 935K3 Akin/O Steen
Chevron-Buick Taylor/Taylor
Aston Martin Nimrod Miller Brummer Olson
Mazda RX7 Knoop Morton
BMW M1 Beilcke Scenard
Toyota Celica Hayje Dallenbach Jr
BMW M1 Fomfor
Pontiac Firebird Slagle-Dyson

RESULTS

1.	Jaguar XJR5	Tullius/Adam	174 laps
2.	Porsche 935K3	Akin/O'Steen	173 laps
3.	BMW M1	Montoya	169 laps
4.	March 83G-Porsche	Holbert/Bundy	169 laps
5.	Porsche 934	Baker/Mullen	168 laps
6.	Mazda RX7	Knoop/Morton	165 laps
7.	Datsun ZX	Leitzinger/Blackburn	163 laps
8.	Mazda RX7	Downing/Maffucci	163 laps
9.	Mazda RX7	Mandeville/Johnson	160 laps
10.	Porsche 924 GTR	Drolson/Oates	160 laps
(etc.)			

MAIN POINTS

• Second win of the season, after Atlanta, for the works-supported Jaguar XJR5. • The race was stopped at the 3 hour mark, which was reached before the leader had covered 500 kms. • Victory in GTO for the Florida-resident Colombian Diego Montoya, who drove his BMW M1 single-handed. • Victory in GTU for a Datsun ZX which had started from near the back of the grid. • Holbert's March 83G with works-supplied Porsche engine was co-driven by 'Doc' Bundy, a quick driver from Georgia who had raced earlier in the season with a Porsche 935K3, the Pepe Romero March 83G Chevrolet and an Aston Martin Nimrod. • The South African woman Desiré Wilson shared Giampiero Moretti's March 83G-Porsche. • Driving a Ford Mustang was the Olympic gold medal winning athlete Bruce Jenner. • A surprising 7th fastest qualifying time was set by the ancient six cylinder engined Chevron-Buick which is usually found at the other end of the grid. It retired after one lap.

DAYTONA 250 MILES

Round 10 of the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) "Camel GT" Championship.
Date : 3 July 1983.
Official title : Paul Revere 250 Camel GT.
Race distance : 250 miles.

STARTING GRID

Andial Porsche 935 Haywood/Foyt
Phoenix Gunn JG1-Chevrolet Gunn/Londono
Datsun ZX turbo Devendorf/Adamowicz
Chevrolet Camaro Hagan/Felton
Posche 935K3 Speer/Pickering
March 83G-Chevrolet Hinze/Don Whittington
Porsche 934 Gottfried/Refenning
Chevrolet Corvette Frink
Chevrolet Corvette Nehl
Chevrolet Monte Carlo Riggins/Moise
(etc: 44 cars practised)

March 83G-Chevrolet Donaldson/Murray
Porsche 934 Baker/Mullen
Porsche 935K3 Akin/O'Steen
Chevrolet Corvette Carusso
Ford Mustang Almeida/Soto
March 83G-Porsche Cowart
Chevrolet Corvette Currin
Chevrolet Corvette Smith
Chevrolet Camaro Gassaway
Chevrolet Corvette Keck/McDill

RESULTS

1.	Andial Porsche 935	Foyt/Haywood	65 laps
2.	March 83G-Chevrolet	Hinze/Don Whittington	65 laps
3.	Porsche 935K3	Akin/O'Steen	64 laps
4.	Chevrolet Camaro	Hagan/Felton	63 laps
5.	Porsche 935K3	Speer/Pickering	63 laps
6.	Phoenix Gunn JG1-Chevrolet	Gunn/Londono	63 laps
7.	Ford Mustang	Almeida/Soto	62 laps
8.	BMW M1	Montoya/Fomfor	61 laps
9.	Mazda RX7	Downing	60 laps
10.	Mazda RX7	Mandeville	60 laps
(etc.)			

MAIN POINTS

• Night race (started at midnight). • Poorly supported, many entrants preferring not to make the trip to Florida: the March 83G Porsche was being prepared for later races, and the Jaguar was being demonstrated by Derek Bell in England at the request of the BLJaguar management. • Overall victory for the Andial Porsche 935 (owner Preston Henn) in the hands of Foyt and Haywood: it is the same car which won at Daytona in the hands of Wollek/Ballot Lena/Foyt. • Yet another GTO class win for the Chevrolet Camaro of Hagan/Felton.

6 HOURS OF MID-OHIO

Round 9 of the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) "Camel GT" Championship.
Date : 19 June 1983.
Official title : Lumbermens 6 hours Camel GT.
Race distance : 6 hours.

STARTING GRID

March 83G-Chevrolet Trueman/Bundy/Rahal
Jaguar XJR5 Tullius/Adam
Porsche 935K3 Akin/O'Steen
March 83G-Porsche Moretti/Van der Merwe
Datsun ZX turbo Devendorf/Adamowicz
Chevrolet Camaro Hagan/Felton
Porsche 934 Baker/Mullen/Nierop
BMW M1 Fomfor/Ganz
Aston Martin Nomrob Miller/Brummer/Ramirez
Toyota Celica Hayje/Dallenbach Jr.
(etc : 55 cars practised)

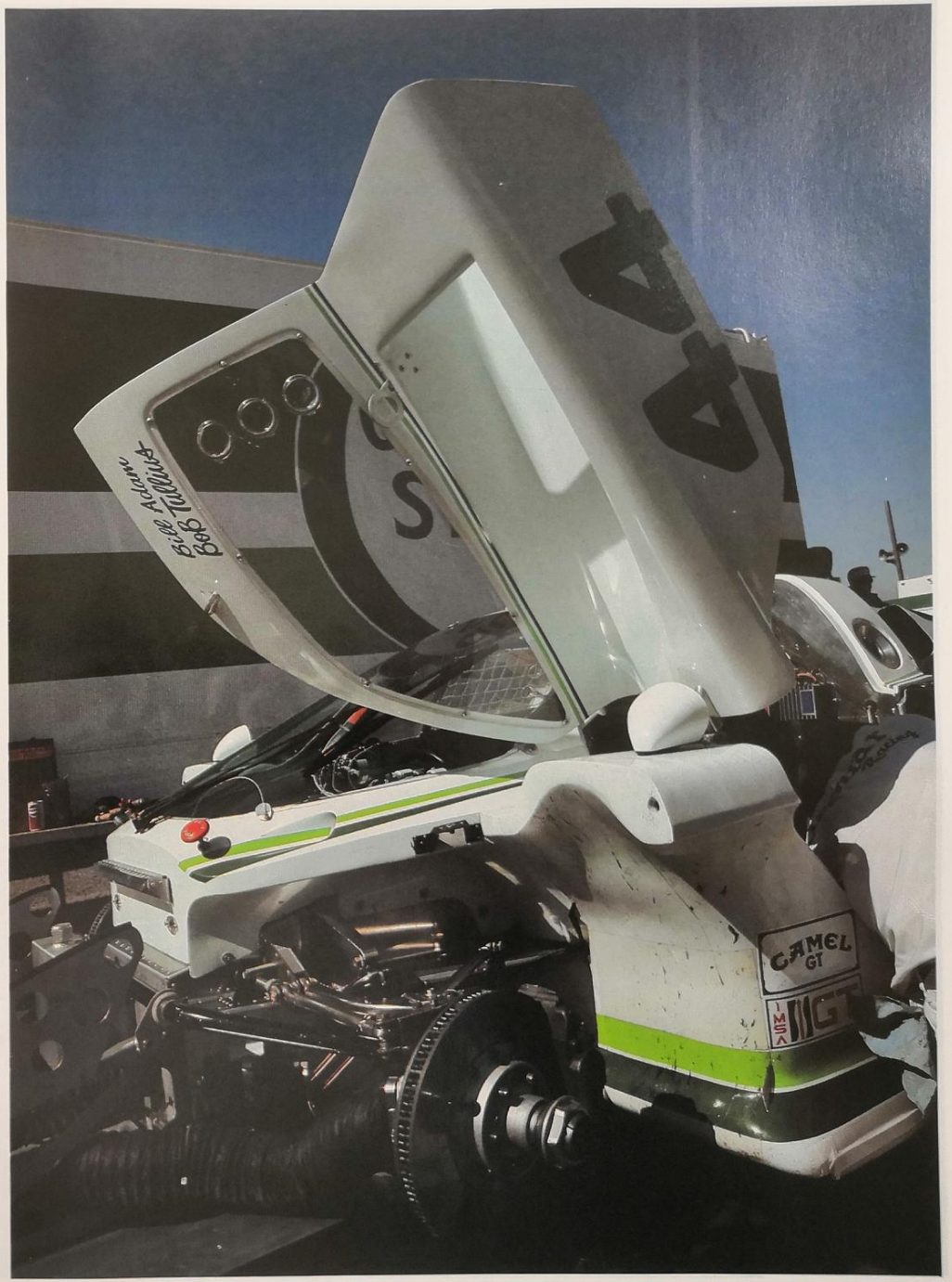
Lola T600-Chevrolet Lobenberg/Morton
Lola T600-Chevrolet Kalagian/Mills
March 83G-Chevrolet D. Whittington/Donaldson
March 82G-Porsche Cowart/Overby
Aston Martin Nimrob Olson/Overby
Porsche 934 Vincentz/White
Mazda RX7 Halsmer/Knoop
Toyota Celica Aase/Moreno
Porsche 935K3 Madren/Speer
Mazda RX7 Varde/Baldwin

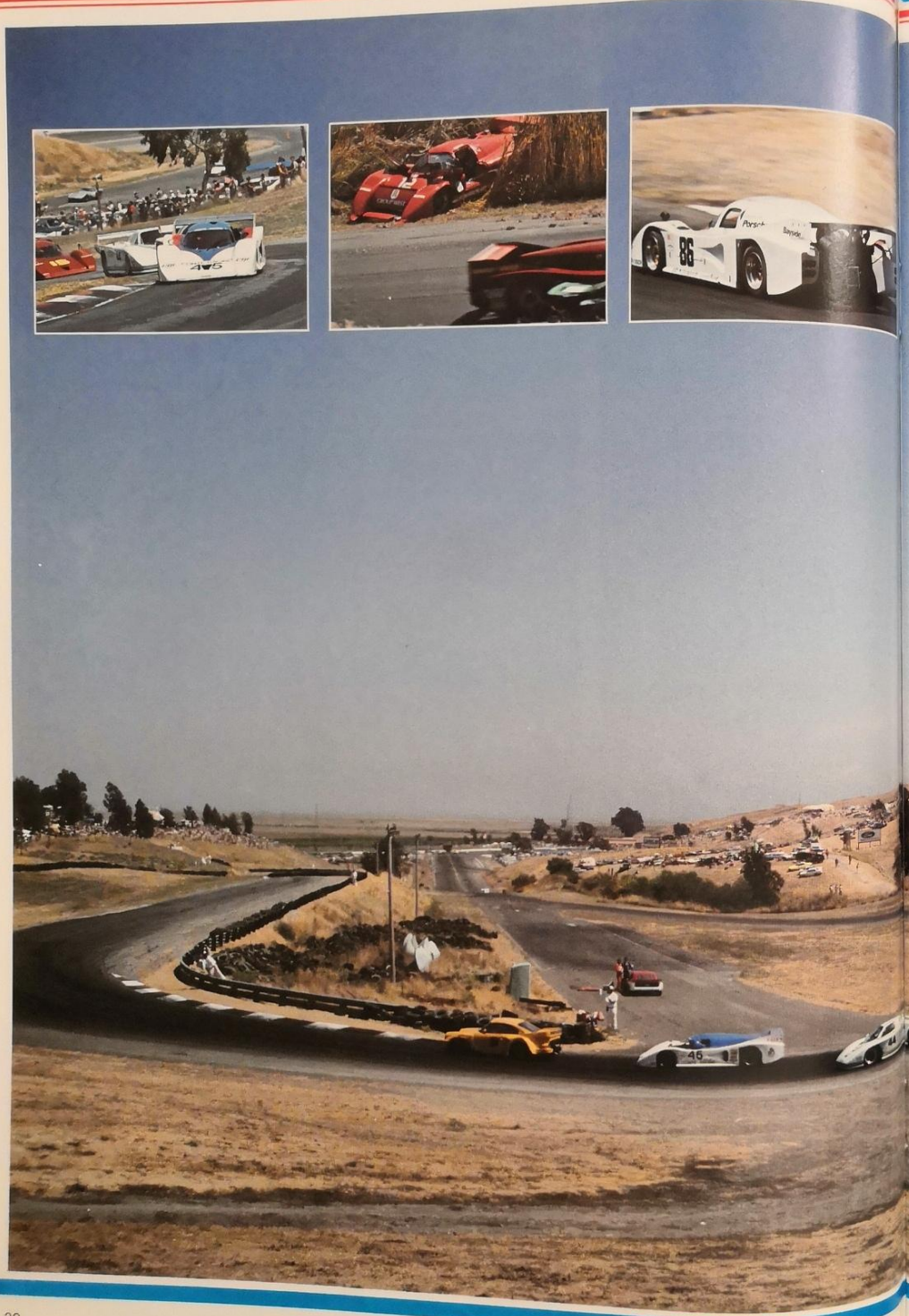
RESULTS

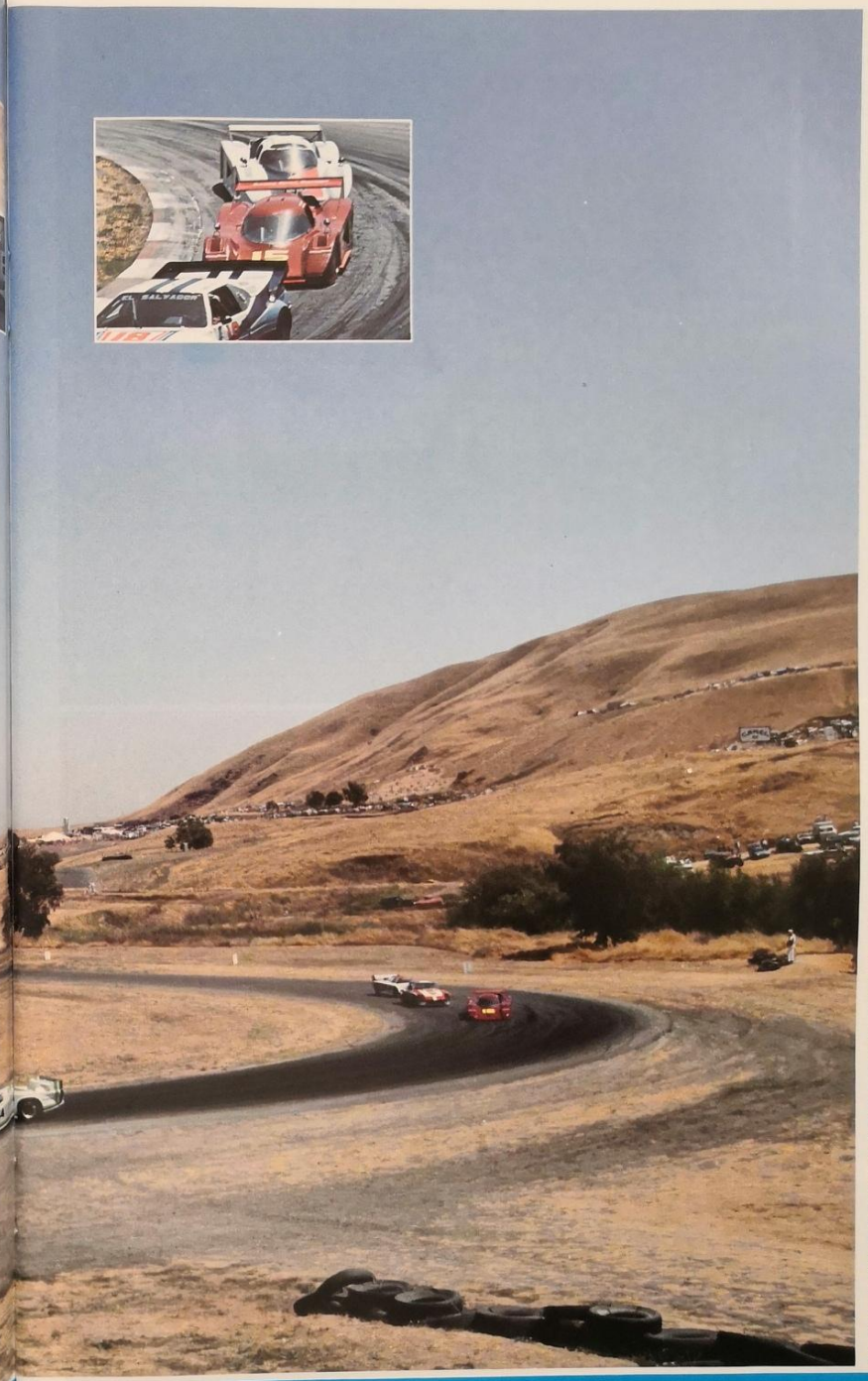
1.	March 83G-Chevrolet	Trueman/Bundy/Rahal	212 laps
2.	Porsche 935K3	Akin/O'Steen	201 laps
3.	Chevrolet Camaro	Hagan/Felton	201 laps
4.	Porsche 934	Vincentz/White	199 laps
5.	Mazda RX7	Varde/Baldwin	196 laps
6.	Porsche 935L	Moretti/Van der Merwe	196 laps
7.	Mazda RX7	Downing/Maffucci	194 laps
8.	Mazda RX7	Mandeville/Johnson	193 laps
9.	Porsche 935K3	Madren/Speer	193 laps
10.	Chevrolet Monza	Courtney/O'Neil	191 laps
(etc.)			

MAIN POINTS

• Because of the length of the race, the March team preferred to play for safety : instead of running the still new Porsche-engined 83G they used the more familiar Chevy V8-engined car. Since the Mid-Ohio race was on the same weekend as Le Mans, where Al Holbert was racing and winning for Rothmans-Porsche, his place in the March was taken by Bobby Rahal. • Having destroyed his March 83G in the previous race, Giampiero Moretti entered his old Porsche 935L "Moby Dick". • Victory in the GTO class for the Chevrolet Camaro of veteran Billy Hagan, usefully backed up by the acrobat Gene Felton. • Two new Lola T600-Chevrolets appeared: Phil Conte's entry, for Lobenberg/Morton, was brand new and replaces his Mirage M12-Cosworth (which is for sale); the Kalagian/Mills entry previously belonged to John Paul JLP Racing team, and Paul Jr had used it to set a spectacular pole position time at Miami.







Sears Point, under the clear blue skies of northern California, witnessed some good racing. Seen inset are the Lola T600-Chevrolet of Morton/Lobenberg leading the Jaguar XJR5 of Tullius/Adam and the Lola T600-Chevrolet (15) of Kalagian/Ramsey; partly masked in the tall grass is the March 83G-Chevrolet (12) of Bundy/Leon; the Lola T600-Porsche (86) of Haywood/Adams; and finally the two previously mentioned Lola T600s seen battling together. (photos: Blakemore)

Following page: The 'Moby Dick' Porsche 935L (top) of Moretti/van der Merwe and the Cowart/Miller March 83G-Chevrolet. A battling group (bottom), with the Baker/Mullen Porsche 934 leading the Cowart/Miller March 83G-Chevrolet, the Morton/Lobenberg Lola T600-Chevrolet and the Tullius/Adam Jaguar XJR5. (photos: Blakemore)

BRAINERD 500 KMS

Round 11 of the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) "Camel GT" Championship.
Date : 10 July 1983.
Official title : Pepsi Grand Prix Camel GT.
Race distance : 500 km.

STARTING GRID

March 83G-Porsche	Jaguar
Holbert/Trueman	Tullius Adam
March 83G-Porsche	March 83G-Chevrolet
Moretti/Wilson	Cowart/Miller
Porsche 935K3	Lola T600-Chevrolet
Akin/Aase	Kalagian/Mills
Lola T600-Porsche	Porsche 935K3
Haywood/Leven	Rude/Pusey
Datsun ZX turbo	Chevrolet et Camaro
Devendorf/Adamowicz	Hagan/Felton
Mazda RX7	BMW M1
Halsmer/Knoop	Fomfor
Datsun ZX	Pontiac Firebird
Blackburn	Canars
BMW M1	Mazda RX7
Montoya	Mandeville/Johnson
Mazda RX7	Mazda RX7
Downing/Maffucci	Varde/Baldwin
Chevrolet Monza	Porsche 924 GTR
Courtney/Erickson	Drolsom
(etc: 27 cars practised)	

RESULTS

1.	March 83G-Porsche	Holbert/Trueman	104 laps
2.	March 83G-Chevrolet	Cowart/Miller	103 laps
3.	Lola T600-Chevrolet	Kalagian/Mills	103 laps
4.	Porsche 935K3	Akin/Aase	102 laps
5.	Datsun ZX turbo	Devendorf/Adamowicz	101 laps
6.	BMW M1	Fomfor	99 laps
7.	Mazda RX7	Mandeville/Johnson	97 laps
8.	Mazda RX7	Downing/Maffucci	95 laps
9.	Mazda RX7	Varde/Baldwin	95 laps
10.	Pontiac Firebird	Baker/Raub	95 laps
(etc.)			

MAIN POINTS

• Serious accident for Kathy Rude, who was racing a Porsche 935 for the first time: she collided at full speed with Diego Montoya's BMW M1, which had stopped beside the track with transmission failure. Both cars burst into flames and Rude was badly injured; she is expected to be hospitalised for many months. • Another big accident, this time for Desire Wilson who was racing Moretti's rebuilt March 83G-Porsche: she did 'between seven and 15' end-over-end rolls, and was rescued with a fractured shoulder. • 2nd-place finishers Cowart/Miller were driving the ex-Haywood March 83G-Porsche which they have bought to replace their much slower 82G, in which they had crudely fitted a Porsche engine. • Bob Akin had recruited Denis Aase as co-driver in his usual 935K3. Aase was without a drive following the withdrawal from racing (all our objectives had been achieved ") of the joint Toyota/All American Racers project. GTO points leader Baker, whose own Porsche 934 was temporarily without an engine, raced a Pontiac Firebird in a bid to collect more points. • GTO class victory for the remarkable turbo-engined Datsun ZX, driven by Devendorf and Adamowicz. The latter is a veteran of the Can-Am and a former winner in IF5000.

SEARS POINT 3 HOURS

Round 12 of the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) "Camel GT" Championship.
Date : 24 July 1983.
Official title : Sears Point 3 hour Camel GT.
Race distance : 3 hours.

STARTING GRID

Lola T600-Chevrolet	March 83G-Porsche
Morton/Lobenberg	Holbert/Trueman
Jaguar XJR5	Lola T600-Porsche
Tullius Adam	Kalagian/Ramsey
Lola T600-Porsche	March 83G-Chevrolet
Haywood Adams	Cowart/Miller
Porsche 935L	Datsun ZX turbo
Moretti/Van der Merwe	Devendorf/Adamowicz
March 83G-Chevrolet	BMW M1
Bundy/Leon	Kendall/Aase
Mazda RX7	Chevrolet Camaro
Halsmer/Knoop	Hagan/Felton
BMW M1	Mazda RX7
Fomfor/Montoya	Varde/Baldwin
Porsche 924 GTR	Porsche 934
Winters/Bergstrom	Baker/Mullen
Chevrolet Corvette	Mazda RX7
Search	Mandeville/Johnson
Mazda RX7	Datsun ZX
Downing/Maffucci	Leitzinger/Mollett
(etc: 34 cars practised)	

RESULTS

1.	March 83G-Porsche	Holbert/Trueman	106 laps
2.	Lola T600-Chevrolet	Morton/Lobenberg	106 laps
3.	Lola T600-Chevrolet	Kalagian/Ramsey	105 laps
4.	March 83G-Chevrolet	Cowart/Miller	105 laps
5.	Datsun ZX tnubo	Devendorf/Adamowicz	102 laps
6.	Mazda RX7	Halsmer/Knoop	101 laps
7.	Porsche 935L	Moretti/Van der Merwe	100 laps
8.	Porsche 934	Baker/Mullen	99 laps
9.	Mazda RX7	Varde/Baldwin	99 laps
10.	Chevrolet Camaro	Hagan/Felton	99 laps
(etc.)			

MAIN POINTS

• Victory in the GTO class for the quick Datsun ZX Turbo of Devendorf/Adamowicz. • Retirement on lap 42 of the Bayside Disposal Lola T600-Porsche driven by Haywood and of Al Leon's March 83G-Chevrolet, which Leon had invited 'Doc' Bundy to share with him. • The March 83G-Porsche had no easy victory: the Jaguar led for a long time before retiring (broken suspension), and the Lola T600-Chevrolet of Morton/Lobenburg didn't drop out of the lead until close to the end, when its tyres were worn out.

PORTLAND 3 HOURS

Round 13 of the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) "Camel GT" Championship.
Date : 31 July 1983.
Official title : G.I. Joe's Grand Prix-3 hours.
Race distance : 3 hours.

STARTING GRID

Jaguar XJR5	March 83G-Porsche
Tullius/Adam	Holbert
Lola T600-Chevrolet	March 83G-Chevrolet
Morton/Lobenberg	Leon/Bundy
Lola T600-Porsche	Lola T600-Chevrolet
Leven/Haywood	Kalagian/Ramsey
March 83G-Chevrolet	Porsche 935L
Cowart/Miller	Moretti/Van der Merwe
Lola T600-Chevrolet	Datsun ZX turbo
Cooke/Adams	Devendorf/Adamowicz
Porsche 934	Chevrolet Camaro
Baker/Mullen	Hagan/Felton
BMW M1	Chevrolet Corvette
Kendall/Aase	Chamberlain/Pillar
BMW M1	Porsche 911
Fomfor/Montoya	Schroeder/Durkheimer
Porsche 924 GTR	Mazda RX7
Winters/Bergstrom	Mandeville/Johnson
Porsche 911	Mazda RX7
Herman	Varde/Knoop

RESULT

1.	March 83-G-Porsche	Holbert	
2.	Lola T600-Chevrolet	Morton/Lobenberg	152 laps
3.	Datsun ZX turbo	Devendorf/Adamowicz	152 laps
4.	BMW M1	Fomfor/Montoya	146 laps
5.	Porsche 934	Baker/Mullen	145 laps
6.	Mazda RX7	Mandeville/Johnson	141 laps
7.	Porsche 924 GTR	Winters/Bergstrom	138 laps
8.	Chevrolet Corvette	Chamberlain/Pillar	138 laps
9.	Datsun ZX	Letzinger	138 laps
10.	Mazda RX7	Downing/Maffucci	138 laps
(etc.)			135 laps

MAIN POINTS

• Single-handed victory for Al Holbert, whose March 83G-Porsche finished 55.15s ahead of the Porsche 935 of John Fitzpatrick Racing. Fitzpatrick's qualifying time was within 0.1 second of the Jaguar, but his co-driver, the Brazilian Roberto Moreno, collided with a slower car during race morning warm-up, damaging the chassis. • The Jaguar XJR5 broke its suspension when lying 2nd following an incident with the Porsche 934 of Baker/Mullen.

MOSPORT 6 HOURS

Round 14 of the International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) "Camel GT" Championship.
Date : 14 August 1983.
Official title : Labatt's GT 6 hours.
Race distance : 6 hours.

STARTING GRID

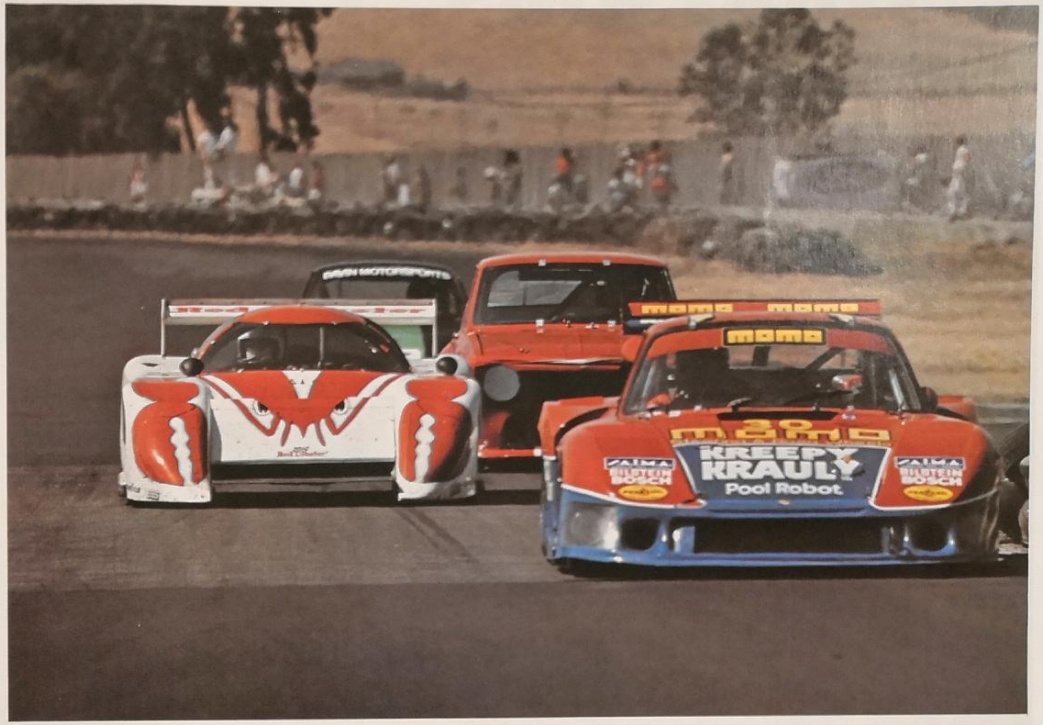
Jaguar XJR5	March 83G-Porsche
Tullius/Adam	Holbert/Trueman
March 83G-Chevrolet	March 83G-Chevrolet
Lockhart/Lanier/Haywood	Cowart/Miller
Porsche 935K3	Porsche 935K3
Akin/O'Steen/Aase	Speer/Madren/Pickering
Chevrolet Camaro	Porsche 934
Hagan/Felton	Helmrath Sr/Heimrath Jr
Pontiac Firebird	Porsche 935
Canary/Weitzes	Graham/Wachs/Haywood
BMW M1	Mazda RX7
Fomfor/Montoya	Knoop/Morton
BMW M1	Porsche 924 GTR
Bien/Gysler	Winters/Bergstrom
Mazda RX7	Mazda RX7
Varde/Kline	Mandeville/Johnson
Pontiac Firebird	Datsun ZX
Allen/Schwartz	Alderman/Baird
Mazda RX7	Porsche 911
Downing/Maffucci	Hochreuter/Brezinka
(etc: 30 cars practised)	

RESULTS

1.	Jaguar XJR5	Tullius/Adam	225 laps
2.	March 83G-Chevrolet	Cowart/Miller	225 laps
3.	Mazda RX7	Knoop/Morton	212 laps
4.	Pontiac Firebird	Allen/Schwartz	206 laps
5.	Mazda RX7	Mandeville/Johanson	206 laps
6.	Mazda RX7	Downing/Maffucci	204 laps
7.	March 83G-Porsche	Holbert/Trueman	201 laps
8.	Porsche 934/6	Selby/Roe	200 laps
9.	Porsche 935K3	Speer/Madren/Pickering	199 laps
10.	Porsche 935K3	Graham/Wachs/Haywood	196 laps
(etc.)			

MAIN POINTS

• Only race in the series to be organised in Canada. • Victory in the GTO class for the Mazda RX7 of Knoop/Morton. • Although classified 10th, Preston Henn's Porsche 935K3 did not complete the race: Hurley Haywood, hurriedly recruited following the early retirement of the March 83G-Chevrolet which he was to have shared with Lockhart and Lanier, had a serious accident, breaking his left leg. • Driving a Pontiac Firebird was the veteran Canadian Eppie Weitzes, a regular single-seater competitor and former national champion of the '70s. • A disappointing 7th place for the March 83G-Porsche following a long pit stop to fix a broken exhaust.



1000 KMS OF BRANDS HATCH

Warwick/Fitzpatrick lead a Rothmans Porsche as the sun breaks through at the end of the race. For only the second time this year it had failed to shine on the works Porsche team, vanquished here — appropriately — by two "locals." (photo: Winter)

One week before the European GP, Brands Hatch played host to a full field of cars complying with Groups C, C Junior and B on the now traditional late summer date for the WEC race. The origins of the Brands Hatch 1000 kms — sponsored for the first time this year by *Grand Prix International* — go back to 1966 and the memorable era of the V8-engined AC Shelby Cobras.

This was the second endurance race of the year to be run in Britain, but unlike the Silverstone 1000 kms and the four previous races it counted for "European" points only, not for the world championship. This was the cause of a few worries for circuit manager John Webb because several teams were busy preparing their cars for the WEC race at Fuji two weeks later, in Japan.

The Lancia team had made a major change by introducing a completely new crew in the second Martini-sponsored car. In the absence of Teo Fabi, who was racing an Indy car in a CART event, and of Michele Alboreto (who didn't have the Brands race on his schedule), Piercarlo Ghinzani was switched to the number one LC/2, with F2 drivers Beppe Gabbiani and Alessandro Nannini recruited to the other.

There was only one Jöst Racing entry at Brands, a 956 for Wollek and Johansson, the team's second 956 still being repaired after Wollek's nasty accident at Spa, and Jöst decided to leave the ancient 936J at home for once. Apart from the two factory 956s, there were private entries from Jürgen Lassig's Obermaier Racing; from John Fitzpatrick Racing (with Derek Warwick as Fitz's co-driver); from Canon Racing (with F2 Euro-champion Jonathan Palmer replacing Thierry Boutsen alongside Jan Lammers); and from the incredible American entrant Preston Henn. For this race Henn had repainted his Porsche in the red and white colours of GPI, for two British newcomers to the delights of 956 technique: former Olympic downhill skier (and F1 driver) Divina Galica; and David Sutherland, one of the leading lights from the Sports 2000 championship sponsored this year by GPI.

Among the absentees were Walter Brun's Swiss-entered 956 and the Kremer brothers' entry, although they had brought along the tube-frame CK5 which they had built for Le Mans. Driving it again was the Dutchman Kees Krosemeijer (who had shunted it at Spa), co-driven by German F3 champion Franz Konrad. Frank Jelinski had been invited back to share Danish driver Jens Winther's BMW M1, and after several IMSA appearances in the USA the Ford-GRID S1 was back, now in the colours of the Flying Tigers freight airline. A big surprise was the appearance, at last, of the Chevrolet-engined Tiga which had been entered but failed to appear for several earlier races. Driven by its Australian sponsor Neil Crang and long distance expert Gordon Spice, its distinctly sketchy standard of preparation suggested a restricted budget.

The weather was beautiful for Friday afternoon's untimed practice session, in which Warwick set fastest time. The following day's two timed sessions were both held under fine conditions and the battle for pole position was soon under way. In fact there was no holding the works Rothmans-Porsches, with Bell/Bellof heading the morning's times with 1m 17.36s, although the rapid Wollek/Johansson pairing were only two tenths behind, faster than Ickx/Mass. The Spa winners were unable to break the 1m 19s barrier, and reigning world champion Ickx appeared particularly unmotivated. Immediately after the race he was due to fly to North Africa,

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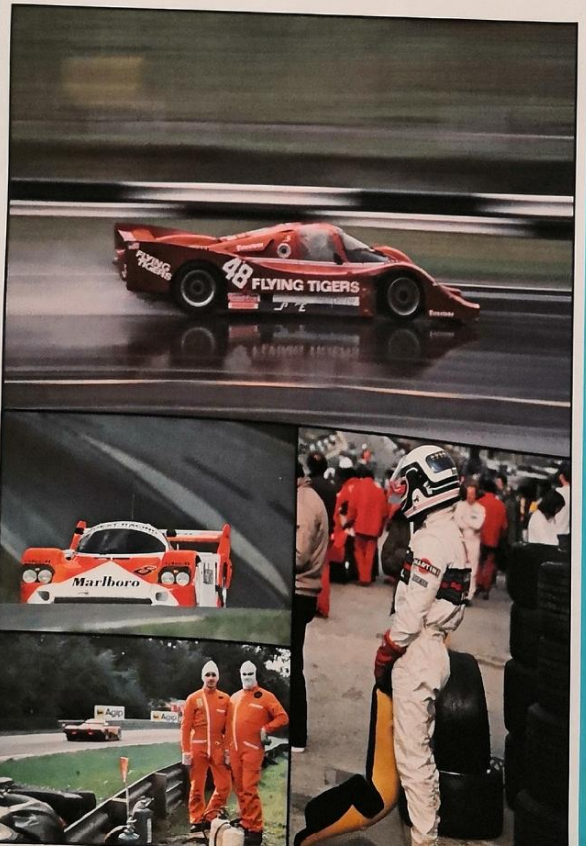
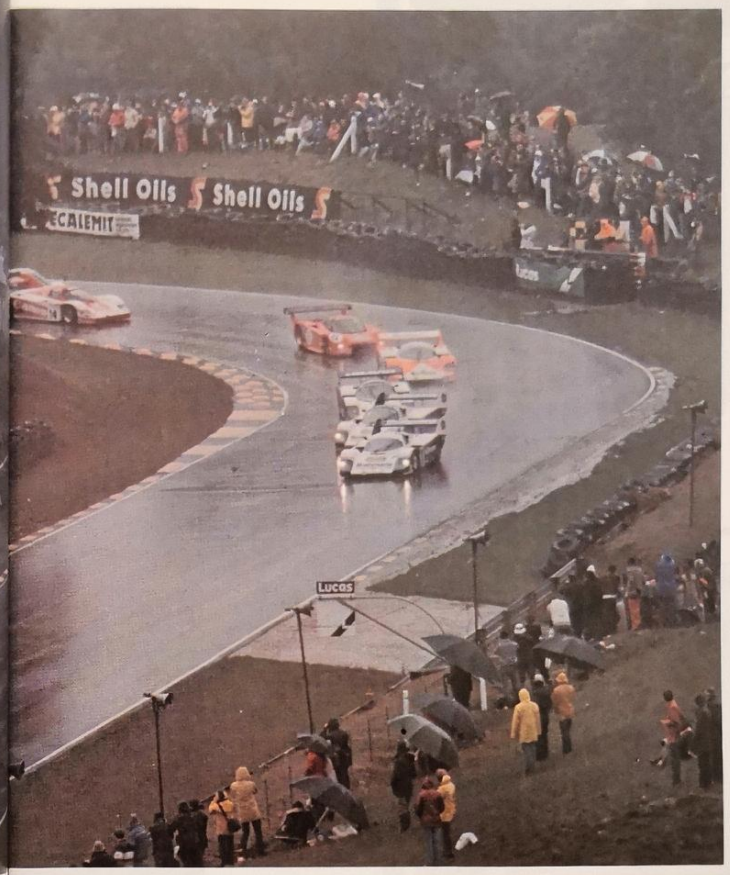
Twenty-four cars on the grid for the European "Drivers" race at Brands Hatch: fastest in practice were the two Rothmans-Porsche 956s. Typifying the whole race is the shot of Bell/Bellof (2) and Warwick/Fitzpatrick (11) side by side. Gabbiani, helmeted, awaits the arrival of Nannini; and Johansson (8) is picked out in the sushine on Friday. Profiled in the rainwater is the Ford-GRID S1 in which de Villota had such an impressive wet stint. (photos: Winter & DPPI)



Coming out of Druids hairpin on the first lap it's Ickx leading Bell, Warwick, Wollek, Francia and Palmer: four Porsches, a Lancia and a Porsche. (photo: DPPI)



In a wet race, with several cars ahead of you, it's impossible to see anything through the spray, as this shot of the Bell/Bellof Porsche demonstrates. (photo: DPPI)

map-book in hand, to start a "recce" for the forthcoming Paris-Dakar rally in a Porsche 928, before setting off for Japan and the Mount Fuji 6 Hours.

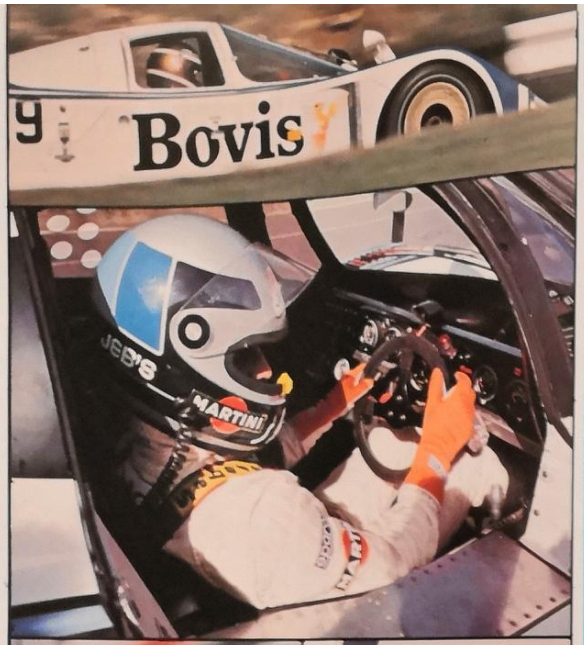
Appearances, however, were deceptive — as they often are with Ickx — and the Belgian had every intention of justifying his champion's reputation. However, unlike Spa, it was to be his team mate Jochen Mass who took up the cudgels. In the afternoon session Mass demonstrated that he's a lot more than just a charming and kind-hearted person by setting a 1m 17.19s lap, more than fast enough to put the number 1 Porsche back where it belonged, at the top of the list.

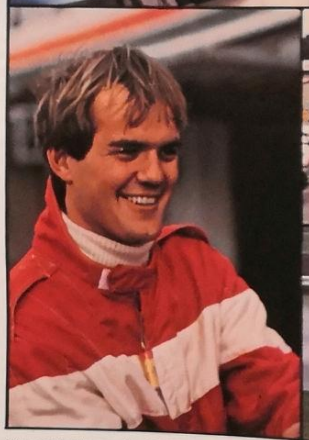
At Lancia it was the "private" entry of the Mirabella team which came out ahead of the works entries, although this was no surprise after its fine showing in Belgium. For the time being, the leading works Lancia had only one driver, Patrese, following the sudden withdrawal of Ghinzani, who had just received the shocking news of his mother's death. Patrese's best lap placed him no higher than 8th fastest overall, and although Alboreto was hastily co-opted back into the team, he couldn't get to Brands until Sunday morning, when he sat in the car for the first time during the warm-up.

Behind Patrese it was Preston Henn's Porsche which turned out to be the slowest of the German-engined cars: a valve had dropped when Henn himself was driving, and with no spare engine available the American had to open his cheque book, take a deep breath and shell out for a replacement unit from the factory. The Ford-GRID was in various mechanical woes and did very few laps, while the bulbous Chevrolet-Tiga was suffering with an oil leak and could do no better than 15th fastest: Crang had a a fright when the temporarily-fixed rear wing came loose on the straight, then swivelled round and caused all the rear downforce to disappear. The day's final incident of note came when the BMW-engined URD — which had been shunted twice at this race last year by Harald Grohs — went off the road in a big way while being driven by one of its French drivers, François Duret — at the exit from Druids hairpin. The URD Rennwagen GmbH crew had a lot of work to do in order to get it ready for the race.

On Sunday morning a reasonable crowd was gathering, thanks to a free 1000 kms ticket having been included in the price of a ticket for the following Sunday's Grand Prix race. But then the weather suddenly changed, the sky darkened, the clowds came lower and lower, and a strong wing brought with it a ceaseless drizzle. Bob Wollek, looking impressively at home under the wet conditions, set fastest time in the warm-up with 1m 38.30s. By midday, when the race was started, the rain was coming down so hard that instead of being merely wet, the track was completely flooded. There were minilakes in the road, and streams of water running across it in places.

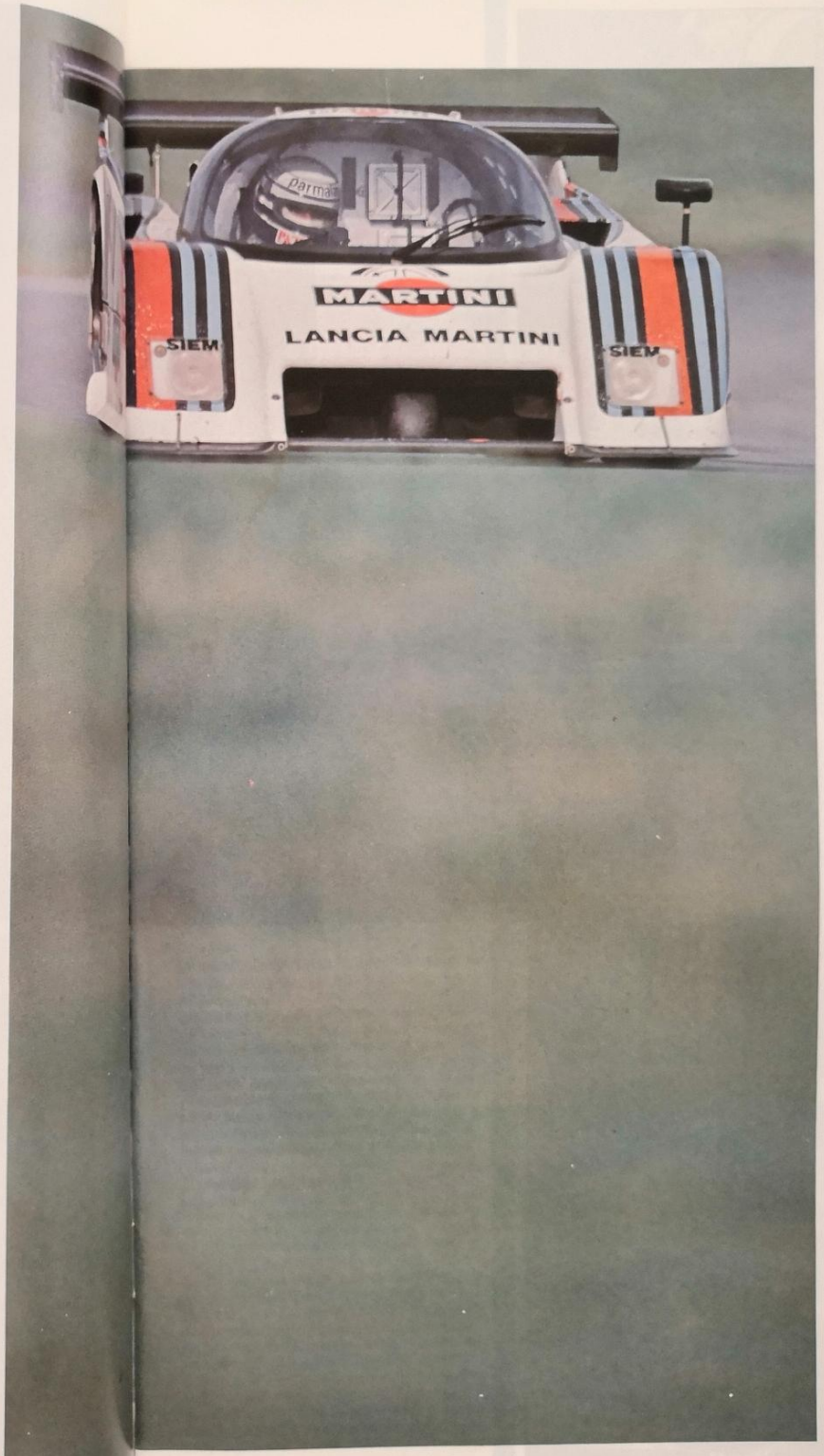
Ickx got away superbly from the rolling start to put himself firmly in front, which gave him the advantage of a completely clear track for a while as the others floundered around in each others' wake trying to stare through the spray. At the end of lap one Ickx came through ahead of Warwick, Bell, Wollek, Francia, Alboreto, Nannini, Palmer, Plankenhorn, Mallock,





Yet again it was the BMW M1 of the Danish driver Jens Winther (89) which won Group B with the help of the quick German Jelinski, in red overalls. Seen in the cockpit of the Lancia LC/2 is Gabbiani, making his Group C debut, who also posed for us alongside his 1983 rivals in F2, from right to left, Palmer and Nannini. Lancia no 4 successfully stays on the road. The Aston Martin Nimrod (39) of Mallock and Salmon, however, retired with transmission failure. (photos: DPPI & Winter)

The best result so far this year for Lancia was 4th at Brands. The drivers were Patrese (here seen at the wheel) and Alboreto, called in as a last-minute replacement for



Galica, Heyer, Konrad, De Villota and the rest of the field. Starting lap three, however, it was a big surprise to see Warwick move ahead of Ickx as they headed into Paddock Bend. For the rest of the race, the Porsche in its gorgeous blue and white J. David livery forged ahead at an inexorable rate which amazed the spectators. Derek, it's true, is an old hand at Brands Hatch, but his performance perfectly underlined the excellence of the Goodyear rain tyres, in comparison with the Dunlops that are universal wear on the other 956s, under conditions where every available ounce of extra grip made a big difference to lap times.

After only a quarter of an hour even experts were finding the conditions tough: Ickx had survived a quitk spin at Clearways (dropping back to 4th place) and the weather was actually taking a turn for the worse, with strong winds and even heavier rain squalls assaulting the Kent countryside. Water was running across the road in rivulets everywhere, while the "straight" behind the pits had virtually become a lake. Apprehensive drivers found that they were in imminent danger of going off the road at any time, and it seemed that everyone was backing off. The exceptions were Warwick, whose pace seemed unaffected, and Villota, surprisingly aggressive at the wheel of the Ford-GRID on its American Firestone tyres.

At the 40 minute mark, by which time the leader was almost a lap ahead of the nearest Rothmans 956, Clerk of the Course Browning decided that conditions had become so dangerous that it might be necessary to stop the race altogether. As a first step towards controlling the race he called out the pace car to lead the field at much reduced speed. It stayed there for ten minutes, causing the whole field to bunch up and wiping out the advantage which Warwick had so brilliantly built up. The talented Hampshireman did not give up, however, and when the green flag came out to unleash the field once more — with the rain still beating down — he continued to press on until, once again, he was the best part of one lap ahead of his nearest rival.

Derek had done so well that when the refuelling stops began after 90 minutes (much later than normal due to all the slow running), his team didn't hesitate to send him out for a second stint, bringing his first period of racing under these tricky conditions to no less than two and a half hours. Those behind, now in the order Bell/Bellof, Ickx/Mass, Alboreto/Patrese, Lammers/Palmer and Wollek/Johansson (the latter delayed by a faulty alternator), were in a hopeless situation because it wasn't until an hour later that the track dried out completely "on line", even though the rain had stopped.

A strip of drying road surface had begun to appear when Warwick returned to the pits a second time to hand over to Fitzpatrick, but conditions were still exceptionally tricky. In order to pass cars that were slow or badly driven (the URD-BMW was a particularly serious offender) it was necessary to move off the dry line to which they clung and move on to the wet. Inevitably there were many mistakes being made, at least until the dry line widened to allow two cars to go through together. This didn't happen until shortly before the halfway mark, and from this point

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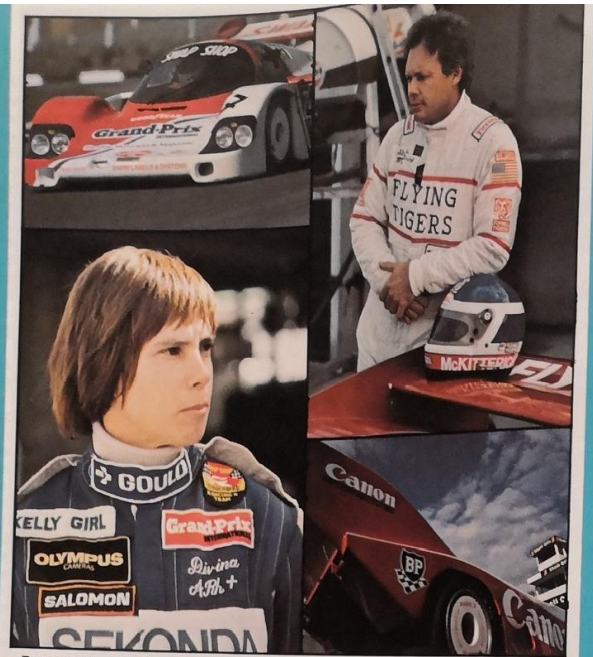
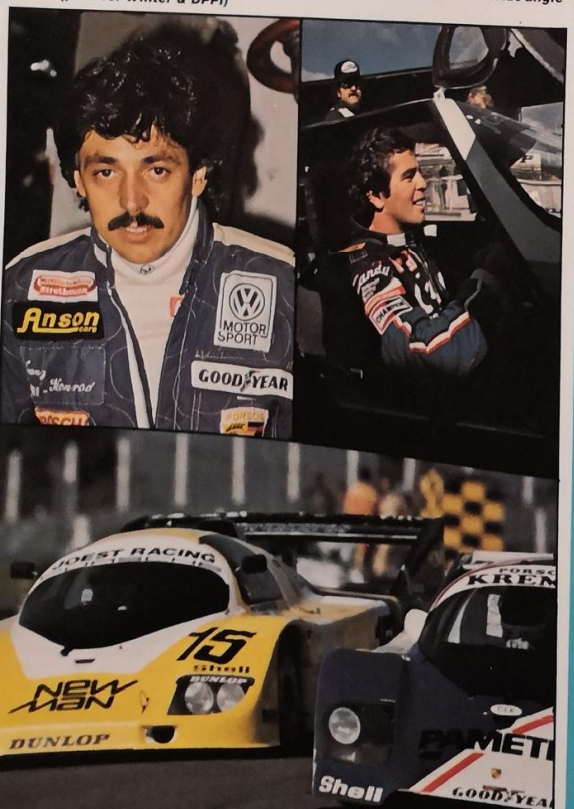
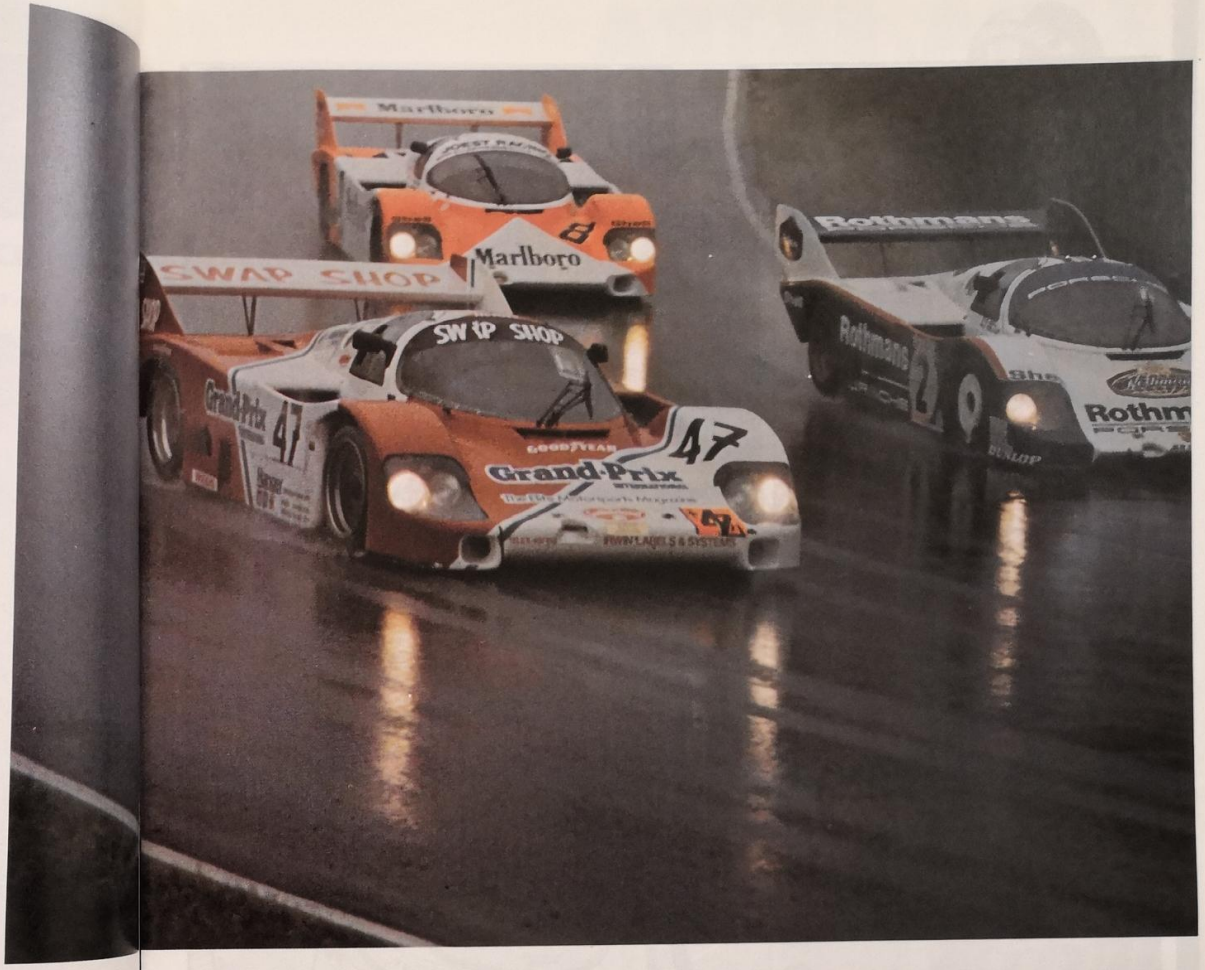


Preston Henn had sent his Porsche 956 all the way from Florida to be raced in GPI's colours at Brands Hatch by Divina Galica (portrait) and David Sutherland (at the wheel): the latter was destined to go off the road. Posing for us were Warwick (the winner); Konrad, the moustachioed German; and McKitterick, the American GRID driver. Fighting side by side were the no longer youthful 936J (15) and the Kremer CK5 (22). Lastly, appropriately, the Canon-sponsored 956 taken with a wide angle lens. (photos: Winter & DPPI)





The Porsche 956s waltz through the water, with Bell/Bellof being chased by Wollek/Johansson as they charge through Graham Hill Bend: the GPI entry of Galica/Sutherland carefully moves aside. (photo: Lawrence Nicolls)

onwards there was a fabulous spectacle for the spectators to enjoy as the drivers of the fast cars took advantage of the opportunity to forget about saving fuel. The reason for this was that the five refuelling stops meant nothing after the first scheduled stop had been delayed by 30 minutes. Accordingly the really quick drivers could wind up the boost and drive as though the remainder of the race was a sprint-style GP, complete with no-holds-barred gearchanges and splendid attacking driving.

This made things distinctly uncomfortable for the less gifted drivers in their mobile "chicanemobiles" as the aces overtook on left and right, often over the kerbs and occasionally on the grass when they felt it necessary to stay on the loud pedal. With Fitzpatrick determined to maintain the advantage that his co-driver had so painstakingly built up, the most impressive performances were being put in by Patrese/Alboreto, Wollek/Johansson, Bell/Bellof and Ickx/Mass. After his first stint the world champion had claimed that he had every excuse not to press on too hard (*"if I make a stupid mistake and wreck the car I know that the replacement they'll give me for Mount Fuji will be one of the older, heavier 956s"*). Somehow, though, he seemed to have thrown all his caution to the winds and was now driving in fabulous press-on style.

Inevitably, mistakes were being made at this sprint pace. The Francia/Barilla Lancia LC/2 was a casualty when the latter put it into the tyre barrier at Clearways, while Gabbiani/Nannini saw their chances evaporate when the engine of their similar car started to lose compression on one cylinder and they were forced to give up altogether with electrical woes.

Newcomer David Sutherland, who had managed to find a reasonably quick pace as he got more accustomed to the power of Preston Henn's 956, also made a mistake which put their car suddenly (and violently) out of contention. This happened just as the third refuelling stops fell due: for Wollek/Johansson it was also the end, for they spent a long time in the pits while the mechanics completed the tricky task of replacing another alternator. Meanwhile, the race was being settled between the factory Porsches and the private entry of John Fitzpatrick Racing.

With its hard-won advantage of one lap, the Anglo-American team continued to dominate the race order, albeit with the factory drivers fighting to reduce the deficit. With an hour of hard work behind them, Bell/Bellof had managed to unlap themselves, and Ickx/Mass were about to do the same. Any chance of Ickx catching his team mates' car for 2nd place was temporarily ruined when the world champion was forced on to the grass in a time-consuming moment involving (yet again) the BMW-URD.

After the final stops, however, with tanks having been only partly filled, it was open warfare between the three 956s: F1 driver Derek Warwick was back in the leading car, Porsche's infant prodigy Bellof was in the leading works car, and Mass - the man who had started from pole - lay third. Bellof put in a terrific effort to catch Warwick, but it was not enough to give him any hope of winning, and when he was forced to make a short unscheduled stop five laps from the end, through went Mass to take over second place. The sole survivor of the Group C Juniors, in 10th place, was the Giannini-Alba, ahead of the Group 8 winning BMW M1 of Winther/Mercer and their rapid third driver Frank Jelinski.

Didier Braillon

1000 KMS OF BRANDS HATCH

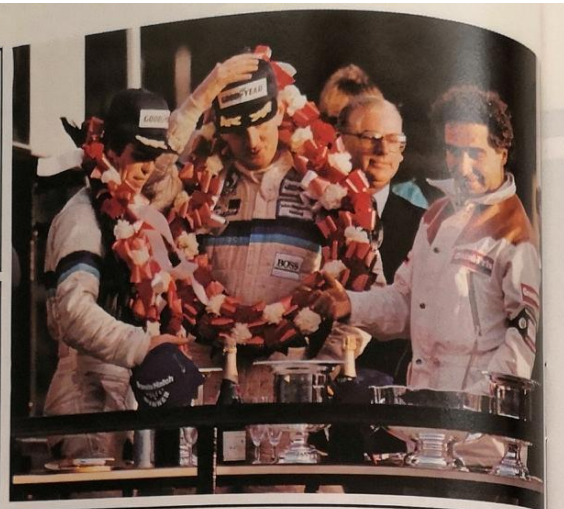
Qualifying round of the European Endurance Championship (Drivers), for which the five previous WEC rounds also counted.
Date: 18 september 1983.
Official title: Grand Prix International 1000 kms.
Race distance: 238 laps of 26 mile (4.21 km) circuit for a distance of 1001.02 kms. Race halted at 6 hours, as required by FISA regulations, after the winners had completed 232 laps.
Weather: Rain storm and strong winds during the first two hours, with track drying after three hours.
Attendance: 25,000 spectators.

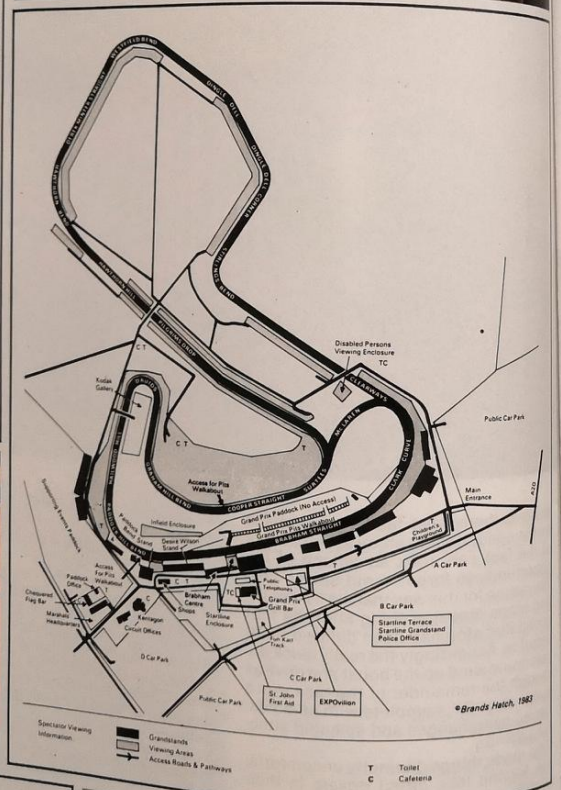
STARTING GRID

2. Porsche 956 Bell/Bellof 1m 17.36s	**1. Porsche 956 Ickx/Mass 1m 17.19s**
11. Porsche 956 Fitzpatrick/Warwick 1m 18.04s	8. Porsche 956 Wollek/Johansson 1m 17.59s
6. Lancia LC/2 Francia/Barilla 1m 20.37s	14. Porsche 956 Lammers/J.Palmer/Lloyd 1m 18.79s
4. Lancia LC/2 Alboreto/Patrese 1m 22.13s	5. Lancia LC/2 Gabbiani/Nannini 1m 20.46s
47. Porsche 956 Sutherland/Galica/Henn 1m 24.02s	18. Porsche 956 Lässig/Plankenhorn/Regout 1m 24.00s
22. Porsche/Kremer CK5 Konrad/Kroesemeijer 1m 25.43s	39. Aston Martin Nimrod Mallock/Salmon 1m 25.16s
15. Porsche 936J Schornstein/Merl/Heyer 1m 27.07s	48. Ford GRID 81 De Villota/McKitterick/Wood 1m 26.36s
63. Giannini/Alba Finotto/Facetti 1m 30.21s	58. Chevrolet Tiga GC83 Crang/Spice 1m 28.26s
62. Mazda Harrier Baker/D. Palmer/Down 1m 32.47s	42. Porsche/Kremer CK5 Cleare/Dron/R.Jones 1m 32.23s
89. BMW M1 Winther/Mercer/Jekinski 1m 35.52s	56. BMW URD C81 Sotty/Cuynet/Duret 1m 33.39s
93. Porsche 930 Smith/Smith Haas/Ovey 1m 40.04s	88. BMW M1 Jürgensen/Gall/Dören 1m 36.96s
96. Porsche 930 Lateste/Bienvault 1m 46.30	91. Porsche 930 Yvon/Gall/Amato 1m 44.49s

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1966 : David Piper/Bob Bondurant (7.0 AC Cobra) — 500 miles.
1967 : Phil Hill/Mike Spence (Chaparral 2F-Chevrolet) — 500 miles.
1968 : Jacky Ickx/Brian Redman (Ford GT40) — 500 miles.
1969 : Joseph Siffert/Brian Redman (Porsche 908) — 500 miles.
1970 : Pedro Rodriguez/Leo Kinnunen (Porsche 917) — 500 miles.
1971 : Henri Pescarolo/Andrea de Adamich (Alfa Romeo 33) — 1000 kms.
1972 : Jacky Ickx/Mario Andretti (Ferrari 312P) — 1000 kms.
1974 : Jean-Pierre Beltoise/Jean-Pierre Jarier (Matra MS670C) — 1000 kms.
1977 : Jacky Ickx/Jochen Mass (Porsche 936) — race shortened to 2hr 45 m.
1979 : Reinhold Jöst/Volkert Merl (Porsche 908) — 6 hours.
1980 : Riccardo Patrese/Walter Röhrl (Lancia Beta MC) — race shortened to 4 hrs.
1981 : Emilio de Villota/Guy Edwards (Lola T600-Cosworth) — 1000 kms.
1982 : Jacky Ickx/Derek Bell (Porsche 956) — 1000 kms.





RESULT

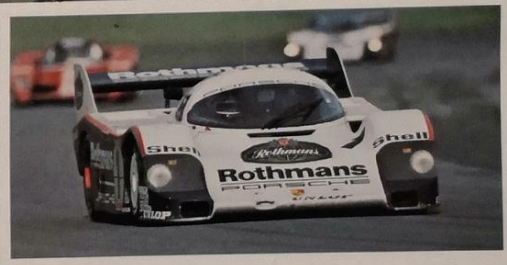
1. Porsche 956 (Warwick/Fitzpatrick), 232 laps, 606.4 miles (975.83 kms) in 6hr 01.74s, 100.8 mph (162.17 km/h).

2. Porsche 956	Ickx/Mass	231 laps
3. Porsche 956	Bell/Bellof	231 laps
4. Lancia LC/2	Alboreto/Patrese	226 laps
5. Porsche 956	Lässig/Plankenhorn/Regout	216 laps
6. Porsche 956	Wollek/Johansson	210 laps
7. Porsche 936J	Schornstein/Merl/Heyer	207 laps
8. Ford GRID 81	De Villota/McKitterick/Wood	204 laps
9. Porsche 956	Lammers/J.Palmer	201 laps
10. Giannini Alba	Finotto/Facetti	200 laps
11. BMW M1	Winther/Mercer/Jelinski	190 laps
12. Porsche-Kremer CK5	Konrad/Kroesemeijer	190 laps
13. Porsche 930	Lateste/Bienvault	178 laps
14. Chevrolet Tiga GC83	Crang/Spice	178 laps
BMW URD C81	Sotty/Cuynet/Duret	174 laps/retired, engine
15. Porsche 930	Smith/Smith-Haas/Ovey	170 laps
Mazda Harrier	Baker/D.Palmer/Down	132 laps/retired, engine
Porsche 956	Sutherland/Galica/Henn	119 laps/retired, spun off
BMW M1	Jürgensen/Gall/Dören	107 laps/retired, accident
Aston Martin Nimrod	Mallock/Salmon	102 laps/retired, transmission
Lancia LC/2	Francia/Barilla	67 laps/retired, spun off
Lancia LC/2	Gabbiani/Nannini	49 laps/retired, engine
Porsche-Kremer CK5	Cleare/Dron/R.Jones	41 laps/retired, engine
Porsche 930	Yvon/Gall/Amato	7 laps/retired, spun off

LAP LEADERS

Laps 1 and 2: Porsche 956 (Ickx/Mass).
Laps 2 to 232: Porsche 956 (Warwick/Fitzpatrick).

Fastest lap: Bellof (Porsche 956), 1m 19.88s, 117.787 mph
Group C winner: Porsche 956 (Warwick/Fitzpatrick)
Group C Junior: Giannini-Alba (Finotto/Facetti)
Group B: BMW M1 (Winther/Mercer/Jelinski)



EUROPEAN ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP (DRIVERS)

1, Ickx 85 pts; 2. Mass 70 pts; 3. Bell 68 pts; 4. Wollek 62 pts; 5. Fitzpatrick 57 pts; 6. Lässig and Plankenhorn 50 pts; 8. Bellof 47 pts; 9. Johansson 44 pts; 10. Lammers 37 pts; 11. Boutsen 34 pts; 12. Hobbs 29 pts; 13. Schuppan 28 pts; 14. Heyer 26 pts; 15. Holbert 24 pts; 16. Schickentanz 22 pts; 17. Warwick, Haywood and Gröhs 20 pts; 20. Palmer 17 pts; 21. Patrese and Regout 16 pts; 23. Merl 14 pts; 24. Rosberg, Stommelen, Mario Andretti, Michael Andretti and Alliot 12 pts; 29. Alboreto and Dören 11 pts; 31. Brun, Stuck, Barth and De Narvaez 10 pts; 35. Lloyd 9 pts; 36. Jones, Sigala, Larrauri, Edwards and Keegan 8 pts; 41. Schornstein, Hamelmann and Gall 7 pts; 44. Needell, Dron, Cleare, Ludwig, Utz, Haldi, Francia and Barilla 6 pts; 52. Finotto and Facetti 5 pts; 54. Mallock, Salmon, Winther, Mercer, Braun, Jürgensen, Memminger, Kuhn-Weiss, Steckkönig, Wilson and Fabi 4 pts; 65. De Villota, McKitterick, Wood, Truffo, Sigala, Martin and Winter 3 pts; 72. Garcia Naon and Montoya 2 pts; 75. Henn, Ballot Lena, Schlesser, Sotty, Cuynand and Bertapelle 1 pt.

EXTRA, EXTRA

RAINY DAY REPLACEMENT

John Fitzpatrick stood in the track with both hands raised. He was welcoming his own teammate, Derek Warwick, driving the J. David sponsored Porsche 956 to victory in the Grand Prix International 1000 kms at Brands Hatch. His elation, rarely so exuberantly demonstrated, symbolised the relief felt by his own team, his teammate and the frustration of his many rivals. For to win against the works Porsche team, and to a lesser extent the Martini Lancias, is surely a feat in modern day Group C Endurance racing. While wanting to prove that it is worth buying one of their 160,000 pound Porsche 956s, the factory doesn't like to be beaten by customers : Porsche has taken steps to ensure that it happens at least only rarely. The best drivers, including young Stefan Bellof, and cars that have a definite if indefinable advantage, ensure that Porsche as a team wins races, but while that keeps Rothmans, Jacky Ickx, Derek Bell, Jochen Mass and Bellof quite satisfied, there is a host of unhappy drivers and sponsors who are upset that their considerable investments are not reaping the rewards of success.

For Fitzpatrick, the win meant a lot, especially as he has two of Porsche's expensive products, and works them hard. *" When we decided to do this series at the end of last year, I didn't realise or think that the factory cars would be as good as they are. I said that if we didn't win one race this year, we'd be disappointed. And when the season started with a win for the Jost Porsche at Monza, it looked as if we as customers might have a chance. But since then, we've had bad luck and the works cars have just disappeared into the distance. I thought we'd never win a race."*

There had been rumours that Fitz's faithful sponsor J. David, a finance company based in Los Angeles but with offices all around the world, had ceased its involvment with the team. That would have been a disaster for Fitz, but the rumours were completely unfounded. *" There were rumours after Rolf Stommelen was killed at Riverside that J. David would pull out, but that was only people talking. I don't know where these rumours come from. A lot of people get jealous when you have a good sponsor, but there are 60 guests in our hospitality suite here at Brands, and the car still has J. David painted all over it... "*

Fitz is certainly doing his bit for his sponsor. After winning that fateful Riverside event, he has concentrated on racing his second 956 in the CanAm series (it isn't eligible for IMSA racing). *" I won the CanAm race at Elkhart Lake a few weeks ago, and in fact, this car with which we won at Brands Hatch, I drove to third place at Mosport last weekend. It arrived back at Heathrow Airport on Thursday and we took it straight to Brands. We already had the other car prepared after Spa, and we ran them both on the Friday, before Brands. We do two six-hour races on an engine before it is rebuilt, but the CanAm car had only done two hours and that felt a little bit better. Furthermore, that car had one or two little modifications on it which seemed to work. We've been developing the 956 over the last couple of months and did some testing at Willow Springs, where the temperature was 110 degrees fahrenheit, and our mods seemed to work. It's to do with cooling but I'm not going to be too specific. The works will find out in the end, but we'll keep the details to ourselves for as long as we can... "*

Developing Porsche's product is one of the few ways that a privateer can hope to beat the factory, but Fitz had another wild card : Goodyear tyres. His long standing relationship with the Akron firm and his success in the United States have meant that he has retained a Goodyear contract: his is the only team in Group C to run these tyres. The factory uses Dunlops, whose qualifier proved to be better in practice, but the Goodyears were better when it mattered: in the race. *" And that was in the dry as much as in the wet, "* added Fitz. *" We never had a single tyre problem, even though Derek sometimes had two wheels on the grass when overtaking wayward cars in the wet. "*

And that was another factor in the John Fitzpatrick Racing team's favour: Derek Warwick, Grand Prix driver and novice Group C racer. In the early hours of a June morning this year, Derek Warwick had wearily trudged back to the Kremer motor-home in the Le Mans paddock saying, *" I suppose I'll have to phone home with another hard luck story. That's all I ever seem to be saying these days. "* The Grand Prix International sponsored Kremer CK5 had just retired, Derek had enjoyed the experience, but it had been as successful as most of his Grand Prix races. Indeed, he hadn't been on the rostrum since winning the non-championship Formula 2 race at Monza in 1980. But since a switch to different turbochargers on his Hart-engined Toleman, his F1 career had taken an upturn in the two races prior to Brands Hatch and he'd scored long-awaited World Championship points. In between the Dutch and Italian Grands Prix, he'd raced in his second Group C event, with Franz Konrad as teammate, at Spa. The experience hadn't been a success, in spite of the performance of Kremer's 956. *" I don't think I would have raced here at Brands Hatch unless I had a good partner. I don't think the other driver at Spa was good enough to keep up the pressure, as John has done today. When he offered me the drive, I jumped at it because I felt we could finish and finish in the top three. "*

Fitz had had to find a different co-driver because David Hobbs was racing in an important Transam race in the States that weekend, and as Derek was eleven years his junior, at 29, Fitz decided to make the younger man work. It was Derek who did much of the qualifying, and he started the race. In the soaking wet conditions, the car behaved admirably, even though Derek spent much of his time avoiding gyrating rivals or wandering backmarkers. *" The problem was passing people, because they couldn't see anything in their mirrors. I don't blame them, because I couldn't see anything in my mirrors either. You just had to pick your moment to overtake, and hope that they would not change their lines. But on three occasions, I actually went off onto the grass on the straight when people moved over ".*

On another occasion, Derek arrived at the long left handed Surtees corner to find Divina Galica's Porsche and Emilio de Villota's GRID stationary and broadside across the track. Fortunately he missed them both. Despite the soaking track, he built up an impressive lead of 45 seconds when clerk of the course Peter Browning decided to " control " the speed of the race with the pace car because of worsening conditions.

Fitzpatrick's team manager Keith Greene and Derek's Formula 1 entrant, Alex Hawkridge, were both furious that Browning had taken this step, which had effectively reduced a 45 second lead to 12 seconds as the field closed up. Fitzpatrick, however, was more philosophical. *" It was bad and the track was flooded, I think they probably intended to stop the race but then the weather eased up. If they hadn't put out the pace car and there had been an accident, we would have blamed them for not putting it out. The organisers did the right thing. I think Peter Browning acted correctly throughout the weekend, pulling people in if they weren't using their mirrors and that sort of thing. He was very safety conscious. "*

But it didn't prevent a number of other incidents, two of which could have cost the J. David 956 the race. Villota's GRID spun at Clearways, right in front of Fitz. *" He spun in front of me and I was already in the corner. I couldn't help but spin as well, although fortunately I kept the engine running. That GRID seemed to do its best to disregard every other car on the track. It was incredible. The trouble was that it was quick enough to be a nuisance if you couldn't overtake it. "*

" That moment took ten years off my life, " added Warwick, going on to recount his own drama during the final ten laps of the race. *" I came up on a Porsche 911 which had been keeping well over for most of the race. The driver had been superb, leaving me lots of room, but this time the driver obviously couldn't see me and he closed the gap as I was going through. I had to go up on the kerb and bent the bodywork which in turn affected the cooling. The temperature shot up during the last few laps. "*

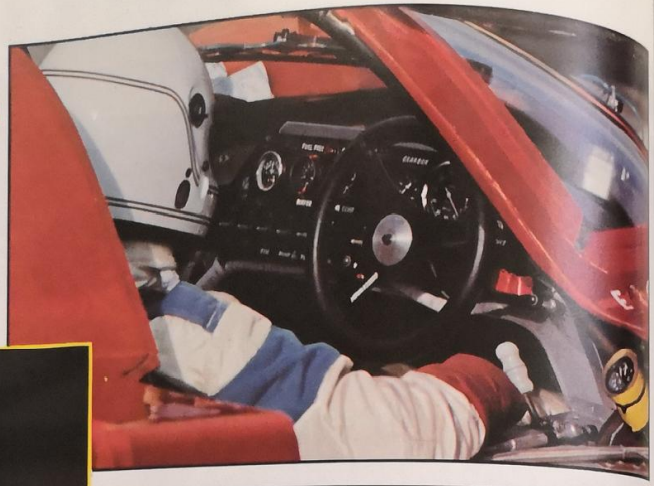
But to everyone's relief, Derek took the chequered flag, and won the race. He had won only his third ever endurance race, and it's a type of racing he enjoys. *" In some ways, the set-up is more relaxed than in Grand Prix racing, but the driving certainly is hard work. You have to think about fuel economy and you have to be easy on the car but fast as well. It's not about doing a quick lap, though. It's being lucky enough to pass the other cars. I must have touched about six other cars during the race. "*

Derek's fan club, his father, brother in law, good friends and about 50 people from his home town of Alresford were delighted that he had ended his streak of bad luck. Fitz was delighted too, but had a rather tricky job to complete : how to tell David Hobbs that they'd won. *" I'm almost too embarrassed... I really hope that he's won his Transam race. I don't know what to say to him... but he'll be back with me in Japan. "*

Bob Constanduros

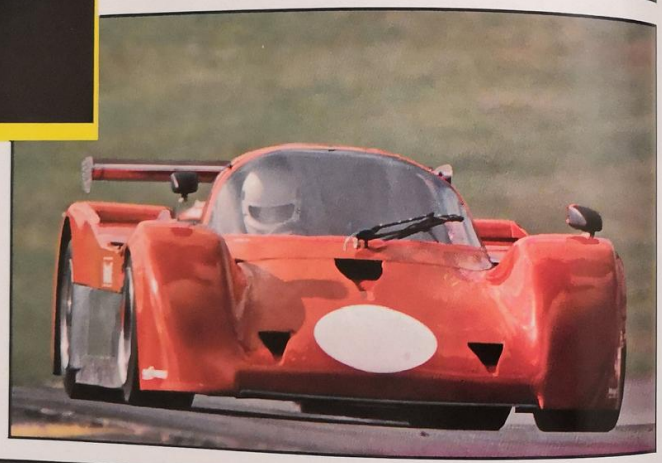
Winter

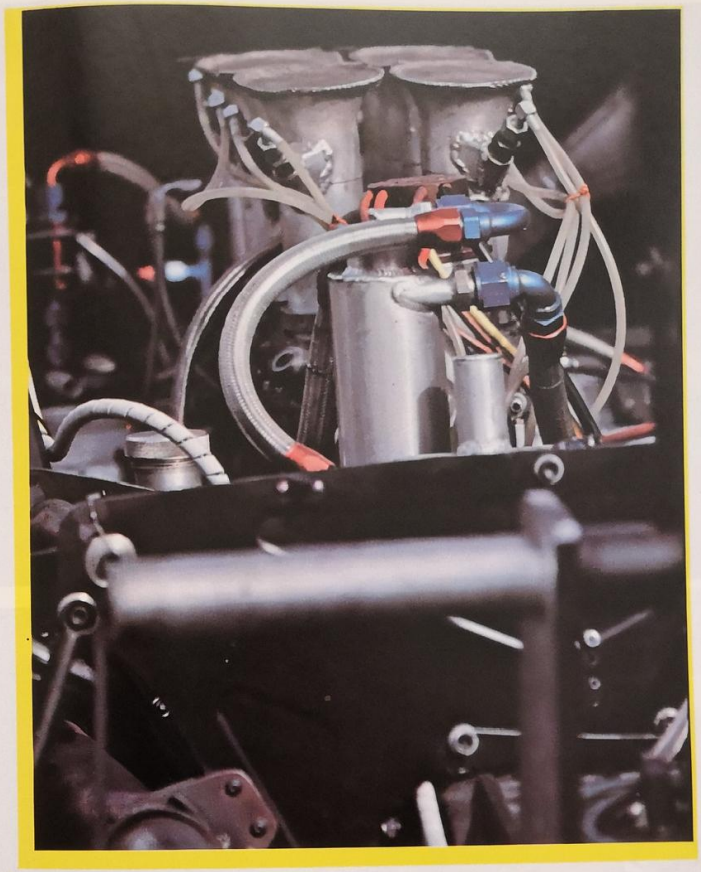
THE MAGIC RUMBLE



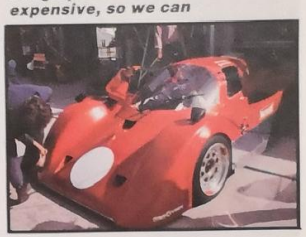
With its 5-litre V8 Chevrolet engine prepared by Alan Smith

in Derby, its smooth lines and glorious colour resembling a classic Ferrari, the Tiga GC83 driven by Englishman Gordon Spice and Australian Neil Crang produced a wonderful effect on the senses. Originally entered for Le Mans, and then for Spa, it eventually appeared at the Brands Hatch 1000Kms, looking as though it had been hurriedly prepared.





Watched over by its Kiwi creator Howden Ganley (left), the former BRM, Iso-Williams and March driver, it managed to finish the race in spite of a series of problems that began in the rainstorm. For Ganley's little company - which he started seven years ago with another ex-F1 driver, Australian Tim Schenken - the stumbling block is the familiar one (insufficient budget). A full season is expensive, so we can



only hope that the cash will be available for the splendid sound of the V8 to carry on rumbling into 1984.
(photos: Bovy/DPPI)

MINI DUEL

Group C Junior, created by FISA to encourage exceptionally economical chassis/engine combinations in endurance racing, has not caught the imagination of the constructors. As at Spa, for the Brands Hatch 1000Kms there were but two entries in the class. Undeniably the faster of the two was the four-cylinder turbo-engined Giannini-Alba (63) driven by veteran Italians Martino Finotto and Carlo Facetti, which went on to finish 10th overall. The Mazda-Harrier (63) with its Japanese rotary engine, driven by the British enthusiasts Roy Baker, David Palmer and Richard Down, retired after 132. The cause was not this harmless spin in the rain but a problem with the engine. (photos : Winter, Bovy/DPPI & Strebelle/First Line).

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LIGHTING UP TIME

A dull thud from the exhaust and a wondrous burst of flame from the turbo produce a striking contrast between the brightness of the burned fuel and the greyness of a stormy day in the Ardennes. It's all captured in this shot of Klaus Ludwig in the Ford Zakspeed C1/4 during the Spa 1000 Kms. (photo: Strebelle/First Line)

BLACK PATCH

Racing in the wet at Spa has been, and always will be, the ultimate test of a driver's ability. And when, God willing, the storms pass on, just to have survived is a major achievement. Thierry Boutsen rescues the Canon Porsche 956 from near disaster. (photos: Strebelle/First Line & Vargiolu/DPPI)

HEAVY ARTILLERY

The stormy conditions at the beginning of the Brands Hatch 1000Kms altered the whole pattern of the race: having been forced to run so slowly by the rain, the drivers were able to forget about saving fuel when at last the sun came out. Those with turbos were able to turn up the boost and drive, for once, flat out. Among the most brilliant in these conditions was the Frenchman Bob Wollek, whose Jöst Racing Porsche 956 was, alas, eliminated from the battle for the lead by an alternator problem. (photo: Bovy/DPPI)

THE WET SLAP...

Britain was to see the second defeat of the season for the works Porsche 956s: after Monza (where the Jöst entry pulled off a beautifully calculated win), it was the turn of the Fitzpatrick team at Brands. For "Fitz" and his F1 co-driver Derek Warwick the foundations of victory were laid in the first two hours, when the track was at its wettest and they were able to exploit the advantage of their Goodyear tyres over the rival Dunlops. (photos: Bovy/DPPI)

ICING ON THE CAKE

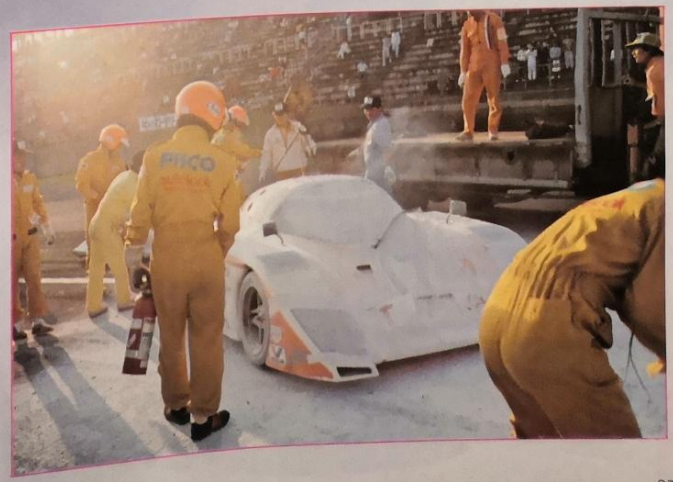
Once again the works Porsche 956s outclassed their rivals and took up a fratricidal duel. A mistake in the pits unexpectedly turned the race to the advantage of Derek Bell/Stefan Bellof (2) and against Jacky Ickx/Jochen Mass (1); in the background the majestic 12,400 ft Fuji-yama looks down from its snow-capped peak. (photos: Foulon(DPPI)

THE ORIENTALS LOOK

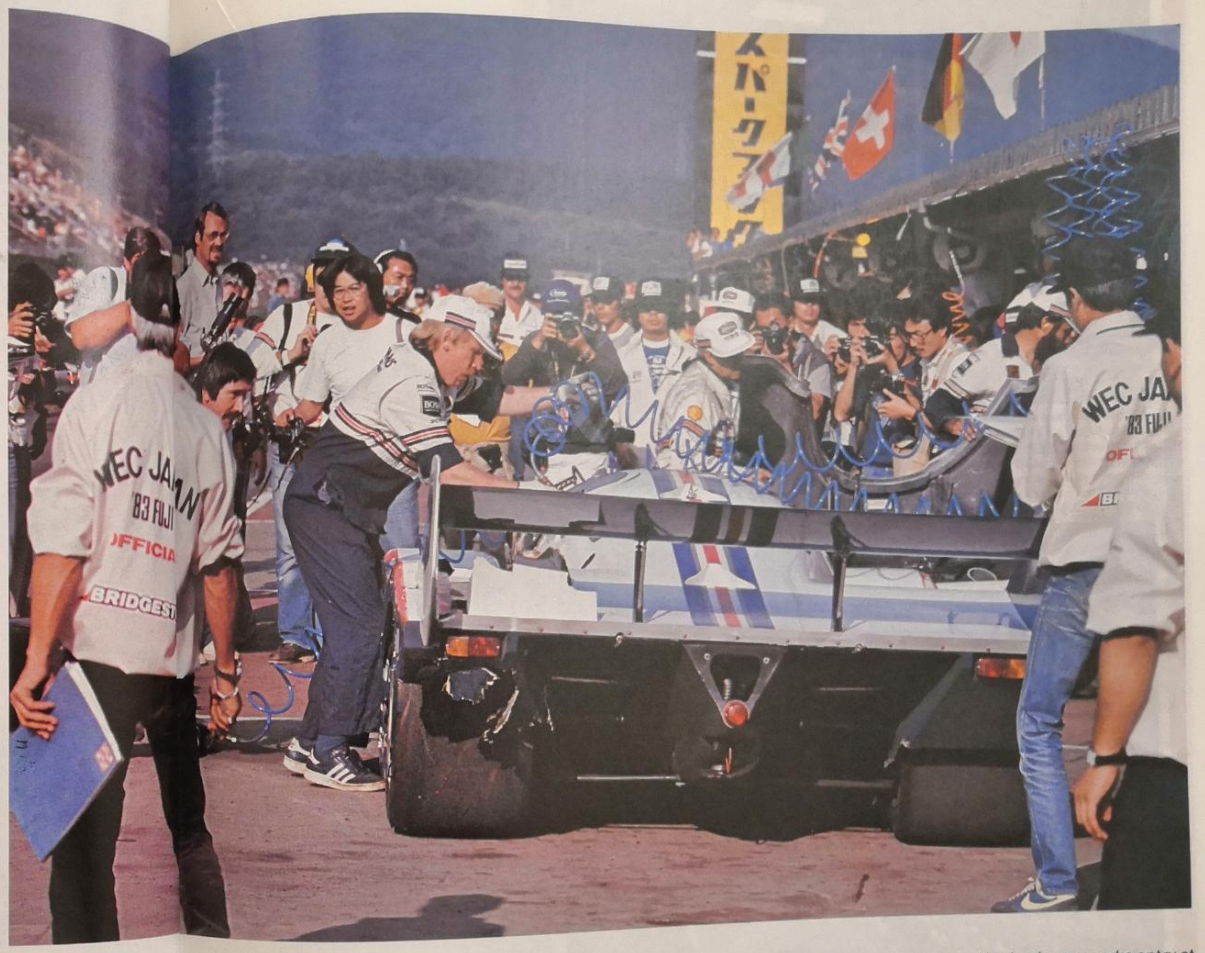
More than 80,000 slant-eyed spectators came to watch the Mount Fuji 1000Kms, making this penultimate round of the World Endurance Championship the second most popular, after Le Mans. The East/West racing challenge — which may one day turn to Japan's advantage — held their complete attention.
(photos: Foulon/DPPI)

IMPACT

Having started from the fourth row of the grid, the fastest of the Japanese-built cars proved to be the Toyota-Dome 83C, and its excellent fuel consumption helped it to move up to 3rd place for a while. Several laps from the end, however, it picked up a slow puncture while Keiji Matsumoto was at the wheel. The deflating tyre eventually exploded, sending the Dome into an impressive series of spins at over 160 mph. It hit the guard rail, hard, in front of the pits, spinning along the road and alerting the marshals. While Matsumoto was being doused with fire extinguisher powder, the Clerk of the Course wisely decided to stop the race five laps earlier than expected.
(photos: Foulon/DPPI and Teissèdre/DPPI)



1000KMS OF MOUNT FUJI



Yet again the Rothmans-Porsches were out in front. Bell/Bellof went through to win after the Ickx/Mass car delaminated an injudiciously-fitted tyre. The mistake was the cause of serious damage (photo) to the bodywork of the factory 956. (photo: DPPI)

There's nothing very oriental about the Mount Fuji circuit except the famous mountain which overlooks it on the surprisingly rare occasions when the cloud lifts. The circuit itself, surrounded by rolling hills and looking over a valley, is like a combination of South Africa and Italy, Kyalami-at-Mugello as it were, with a long straight in one direction and a twiddly return section. The corners are unusually challenging insofar as most of them don't have an identifiable apex, as a result of which it's difficult to find a quick line, especially for the fastest cars.

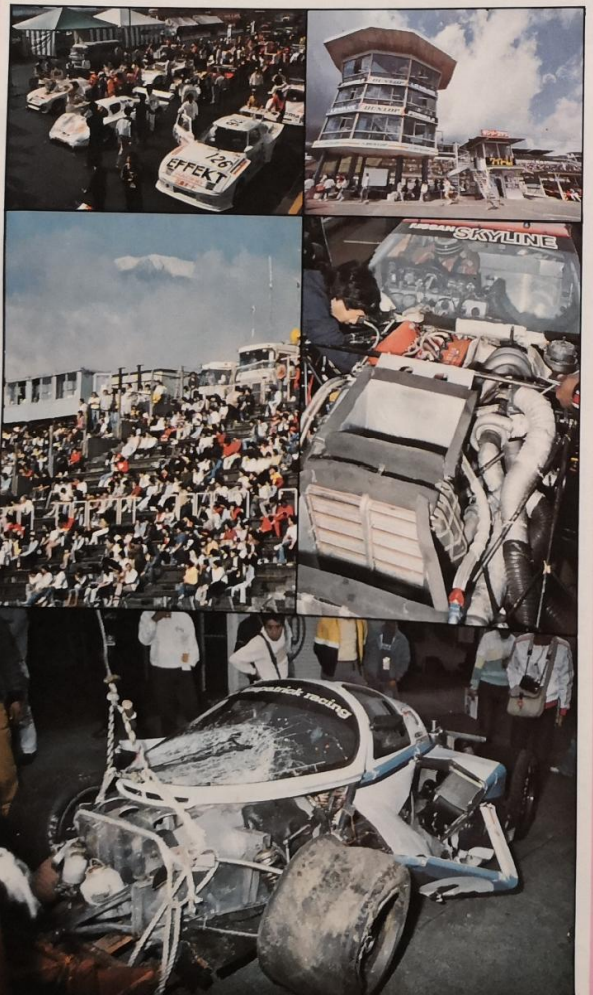
Going to Fuji involves a 17 hour flight via Anchorage in Alaska, where one has 45 minutes in which to stretch the legs and study the duty-free goods. Normally the weather is fine and warm at this time of the year in Japan, although the bumpy ride of our Air France 747 as it flew south towards the Japanese islands suggested otherwise. In fact it was running through the discommotion created by typhoon Number Ten, which had beenresponsible for the deaths of 21 people in landslides and floods below. Tokyo's Narita airport was sodden on arrival: it then took no less than four hours to cover the 120 kilometres by bus to the hotel at Hakone, near the circuit. And throughout Thursday, Friday and Saturday the giant peak we had come such a long way to see remained so firmly cloistered behind its protective layer of cloud that some members of the party started to wonder if it really existed...

Japan, therefore, is a long way from Europe. And although the Japanese assault is about to be felt in Grand Prix racing, for the time being the country's sports-racing car industry is exporting surprisingly few of its products. Nevertheless, there is a well-supported national championship in the land of the rising sun, with six rounds at the country's two major circuits. As befits the company whose rotary-engined Group C Junior cars won their class at this year's Le Mans, Mazda is the most prolific name in the national series, although there are more powerful entries from Toyota and Nissan-Datsun. Thus it was that the Mount Fuji 1000Kms is becoming an East/West challenge, with the added interest of the knowledge that both Toyota and Nissan are considering a full-blooded attempt on the WEC for Makes at some future date.

Mazdaspeed had only one works entry at Fuji, bringing out the 717C which had already been seen at Le Mans and entering it in Group C rather than C Junior. The policy of the other two major manufacturers is somewhat different, however: instead of building their own cars they supply works-built engines to private teams, leaving them to buy or build suitable racing chassis as they wish.

Nissan is known to have a 3-litre V6 engine almost ready for racing, but for the time they are relying on a turbocharged 2.1-litre four-cylinder unit. Three drivers — all of whom once raced for the factory team — have been given engines: Masahiro Hasemi, Kazuyoshi Hoshino and Haruhito Yanagida. All three have turned for their chassis to the Le Mans company, which not only makes racing cars but is also the official March importer to Japan. Yanagida's LM30C, entered by the Central 20 Racing Team, is known as a "Fairlady Z," while the front-engined car raced by Masahiro Hasemi races as a "Skyline" (both trade-marked Datsun names). Similarly, Hoshino's March 83G masquerades as a "Sylvia." →

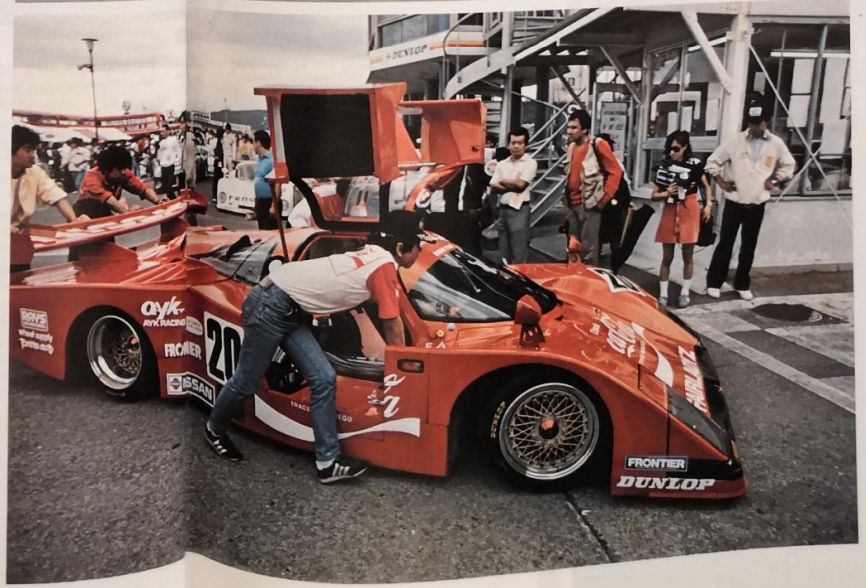
Fitzpatrick crashed his J.David 956 on Thursday because of a puncture and decided not to try and repair it; his attempts to hire the spare Rothmans Porsche failed; the Nissan Skyline has a centrally mounted four cylinder turbo engine developing nearly 600 bhp. Mount Fuji finally made an appearance on race day, capped with a new fall of snow while the receptions given by Mitsuwa Motors, importers of Porsches to Japan, were superb.
(photos: DPPI)



An enormous crowd came to watch the 33 cars in the Fuji 1000Kms - surely it was one of the most profitable races of the season.
(photo: DPPI)

Needell drives the attractive Ford-Dome RC83; the rear end is similar to its predecessor's but with more of a flare.
(photo: DPPI)

The Nissan-powered cars were named after production models in the Datsun range: the LMO3C was called the Fairlady Z, a thoroughbred racing car reminding one of the Lola T600.
(photo: DPPI)



Exactly the same method is used by Toyota, which supports two Dome chassis cars fitted with its turbocharged four-cylinder engine, also of 2.1-litre capacity. One of them is raced by the TOM's team of Nobuhide Tachi (the main agent for Toyota performance parts), with three Japanese drivers — Keiji Matsumoto, Kaoru Hoshino and Masuori Sekiya. The other belongs to the team run by Tetsu Ikuzawa, the one-time driver whose F3 and F2 performances in the late 60s brought him to public attention in Europe. Ikuzawa's regular driver is the 1981 European F2 champion, Geoff Lees, who has been based in Japan this year, and for this race he was joined by one-time F1 driver Derek Daly.

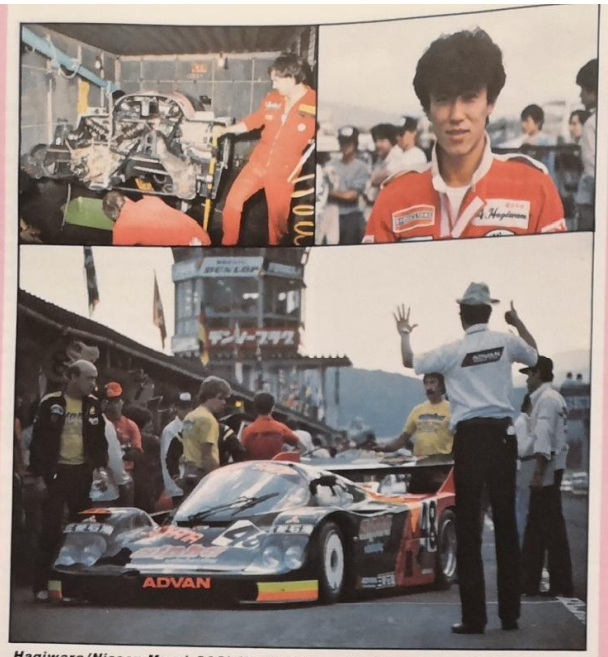
A third Dome, fitted with a locally-rebuilt 3.9-litre Cosworth DFL engine, was entered by the Central 20 Racing Team for Tiff Needell and Eje Elgh.

There were also three locally-entered Porsche 956s. The Trust-sponsored entry from Nova Engineering, which has done all six rounds of the national championship, was entered for its regular crew of Vern Schuppan/Naohiro Fujita, while there was also a brand new 956 for the Franco-Belgian team of Henri Pescarolo/Thierry Boutsen. This car is the property of Yoshiho Matsuda, a wealthy businessman and long-time Porsche admirer who has no fewer than three private car museums, one of them solely for Porsche, his first love. Incredibly, the new car was due to go straight into the museum after the Fuji race, provided that Boutsen and Pescarolo managed to bring it home in one piece.

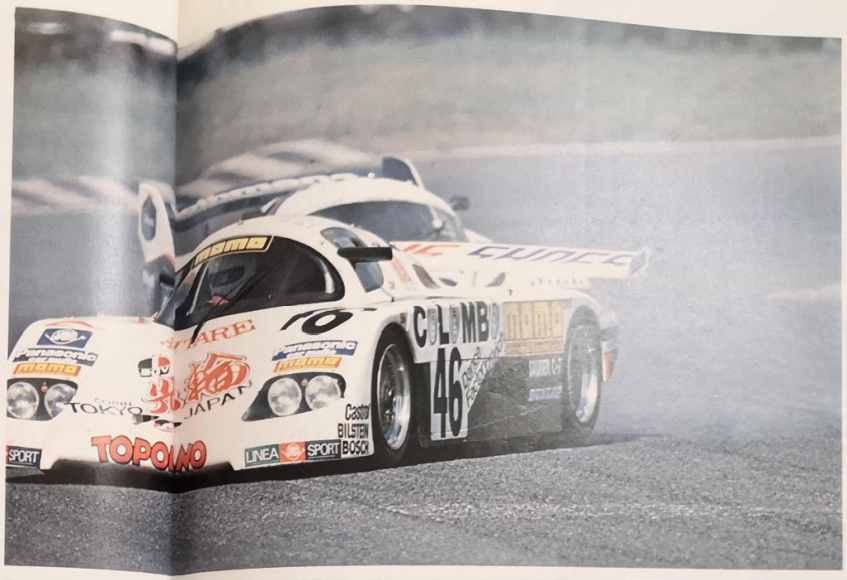
A great friend and rival of Matsuda's is Ryoji Hayashi, who owns a successful clothing company. Last year Pescarolo and Boutsen had driven a Rondeau in Hayashi's pink and white colours, and it was hardly a coincidence that Matsuda had recruited the same crew into his new Porsche... To keep up the rivalry, Hayashi too has a car collection of his own, which he jealously protects from prying eyes, and naturally he had to have a 956, too. Thus it was that he had invited the Kremer brothers to bring along their ex-Jones, ex-Andrettis example, with an option to buy it afterwards for the museum. Fate, however, soon intervened *(see Extra, Extra)*.

The non-arrival of the Lancias (which greatly displeased the race organisers) left European honours in the hands of the six 956s and the atmospheric-engined BMW Sauber C7 which had gone so well at Le Mans, now in the hands of the Italian Fulvio Ballabio and the Swiss Max Welti. The works Rothmans-Porsche team had its two star pairings of Ickx/Mass (last year's winners) and Bell/Bellof, who had a brand new chassis, 009, to replace 004. There was also a spare 956, for use mainly as a camera car.

Preston Henn's 956 arrived in the colours of Advan (Yokohama tyres), with Alpha Windsurf as a last minute sponsor, and Henn was sharing it with John Paul Jnr and Kunimitsu Takahashi. In Walter Brun's new 956 were Kenji Takahashi (norelation) and Clemens Schickentanz. The yellow and black New Man Porsche of the Jöst team, a non-starter at Brands following its accident at Spa, was making its return in the hands of Bob Wollek, Hans Heyer and Volkert Merl. And the Brands



Hagiwara (Nissan-March 83G), Hasemi (Nissan Skyline turbo) and Fujita (Porsche 956) were three competitive Japanese drivers, seen from top to bottom; the Domes were fitted with either Cosworth DFL (middle) or Toyota turbo engines (below); that driven by Geoff Lees, powered by a Toyota, suddenly caught fire during Friday morning's unofficial practice and was badly damaged; below left, Yoshiho Matsuda; the Kremer brothers had to rebuild their 956 before raceday, while Preston Henn's model is seen in the pits. (photos: DPPI)



Peter Sauber's BMW-engined C7, which had such a reliable run to ninth at Le Mans was again troublefree at Fuji, this time in the hands of Max Welti and Fulvio Ballabio. The latter brought Topolino sponsorship which is none other than Italy's translation of Mickey Mouse. (photo: DPPI)

By winning at Fuji, Bell/Bellof brought their win tally to two after Silverstone which puts them equal with fellow Rothmans drivers Ickx/Mass. (photo: DPPI)

Pescarolo had never driven a 956 in a race until Porsche collector Yoshiho Matsuda asked him to join Thierry Boutsen in his 956. (photo: DPPI)

Hatch winner, John Fitzpatrick, had one of his two J. David-sponsored 956s, with regular co-driver David Hobbs back alongside him.

The nine Porsche 956s represented the hopes of no fewer than four different tyre manufacturers: Goodyear (Fitzpatrick and Matsuda); Dunlop (Rothmans, Trust and Jöst); Yokohama (Brun and Henn); and Bridgestone (Kremer).

Group C Junior has yet to prove its attractiveness, but five cars was the best entry of the year. The regular Giannini-Alba of Finotto/Facetti was joined by the Lotec-BMW of the German Kurt Lotterschmid. Lastly there were three March 75S-based "Juniors" with coupé bodies designed and built by Takuya Yura, the man who is responsible for the chubby bodies seen in Europe on the works Mazda 717Cs. Each of the March entries has a different engine: Mazda, Toyota and BMW. Although not eligible for world championship points, the field was completed by locally-entered GT cars, mostly the inevitable Mazda RX7s but also including a Group B Nissan (Datsun) 240RS.

Untimed practice began on Thursday, when the visitors had their first opportunity to familiarise themselves with the difficult Fuji circuit and its bumps. John Fitzpatrick, who despite his 20 years of racing had never been to Japan, had the misfortune to go off the road heavily when his 956 punctured a tyre in the corner before the pits.

The car was clearly unraceable, and in spite of a request to rent the spare Rothmans 956, Fitz was obliged to scratch his entry. This was to be only the first of a serious of four major accidents over the weekend. Meanwhile, the JFR mechanics turned their attention to looking after Matsuda's Pescarolo/Boutsen Porsche 956, whose mechanics clearly needed some experienced assistance.

The next day, the Ikuzawa's team Toyota-Dome suddenly burst into flames. Geoff Lees couldn't find the door catch to get himself out of the car and while flames licked at his face, only other drivers were on hand to help. Finally, he managed to leap out and later, his hands trembling as he spoke, he admitted *"I thought I was a goner."* On Saturday, it was Philippe Alliot's turn.

The factory Porsches dominated practice and shattered the 1m 12s lap record. Bellof set pole position, while Bell reckoned they should have got down to the 1m 9s bracket.

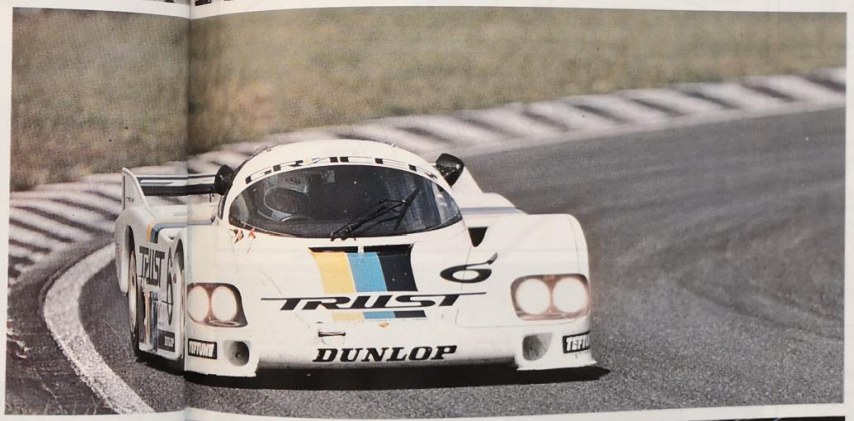
In the afternoon, Jacky Ickx and Jochen Mass, who turned 37 that day, spent the session fine-tuning their 956 without trying to set a time. There was no doubt that the two works 956s wouldn't be beaten. Boutsen, however, did well to slot his 'museum-piece' into third spot on the grid, after Keith Greene and his men had made *"one or two little modifications,"* as Thierry described them with a slight smile.

The race started in the sun but a quarter of an hour late, not a hopeful sign from the land of the quartz watch! However, the works Porsches looked as though they were making up for lost time when the race got under way. Stefan Bellof led from Jochen Mass while Schuppan, Wollek and Boutsen followed, but at a respectable distance.

Stefan immediately established a rapid pace. He was already lapping backmar-

Pescarolo and Boutsen first drove together for Rondeau but were back together again in a Porsche at Fuji; the rostrum, left to right: Mass, Ickx, Bell and Bellof; Jacky relaxes, Katherine provides the pillow; Lees chats to Derek Bell and teammate Daly before his Toyota-Dome caught fire; detail shots of the Nissan-powered LM03C (called the Fairlady Z) and the March (christened Silvia), the latter was the first non-Porsche home in seventh place.
(photos: DPPI)

Stefan Bellof, the winner, and second placed Jochen Mass are two Germans of different eras, but both recognise the need to keep fit.
(photo: DPPI)



First of the non-works Porsches - an achievement in itself - was the long-tailed version run by Nova Engineering which has won all the Japanese endurance events in the hands of Schuppan/Fujita.
(photo: DPPI)

Bob Wollek shared the New Man Porsche 956 which was crashed at Spa with Merl and Heyer, but in finishing fifth, Bob lost all hope of becoming World Champion this year.
(photo: DPPI)

kers by the fourth lap, and after 16 laps, only four other cars were still on the same lap as the two Rothmans Porsches. The younger German was trying hard to leave behind his 37 year old (just) compatriot, Jochen Mass. If he could pull away a little, it would make things easier for co-driver Derek Bell, still in with a good chance of winning the World Championship from Jacky Ickx. But Jochen wasn't giving an inch. On the 17th lap, he overtook the Bellof 956 at the first corner and this time it was the younger man attempting to keep up with his older compatriot. When the works Porsches came in to refuel around the 40 lap mark, they were already a lap ahead of their nearest rival, in this case the TOM'S Toyota-Dome whose frugal 2.1-litre engine wouldn't require refueling for another eight laps.

On the 60th lap, Bell was overtaken by Ickx. The Englishman's works car was understeering badly, while Jacky's hard work the previous afternoon in setting up the car was bearing fruit. His car was handling perfectly. And Derek's fate seemed to have been sealed when he brought his Porsche into the pits just before the third hour with a punctured tyre. Only a few seconds were lost, but it seemed that nothing now would upset a Rothmans Porsche 1-2: Ickx/Mass from Bell/Bellof. But when the lead 956 came into the pits for its third fuel stop, the mechanics fitted two righthand rear wheels. It was a bad mistake. Ickx covered 15 laps with one tyre turning in the wrong direction from that for which it was designed, and then suddenly it delaminated and blew.

For once, Lady Luck had smiled on Bell and Bellof. And their win was confirmed even earlier than expected. The Toyota-Dome suffered a deflating tyre and quite suddenly the tyre blew on the pit straight. The car hit the barrier and came to rest on the track where it was promptly covered with fire exinguisher powder. Wisely, the organisers decided to stop the race with the red flag, and the order was taken five laps short of full distance.

The Fujita/Schuppan long-tailed 956 finished third after a steady race, a lap ahead of the Matsuda 956 which was delayed by a bad misfire during the second half of the race. Fifth was the New Man 956 which suffered two collisions when Merl was driving, and later another which caused a puncture. Walter Brun's Porsche lost time when a turbo had to be replaced: it finished sixth. The first of the locally-built cars was the Nissan-March which took seventh place despite a nose damaging collision, but the faster was the TOM'S Toyota-Dome. Hoshino was as high as third, usually in the top six, until a collision damaged the front bodywork and replacing it relegated the car to ninth place.

"We share our prize-money in the Porsche team," said Derek Bell after the race, *"and it's so good here that last year I won more for retiring than I did for winning Le Mans!"*

Porsche won, the Japanese lost. That's no surprise really but the local cars aren't entirely uncompetitive, as the unfortunate Toyota-Dome teams proved. In 12 months, the story may be different, but meanwhile, the clouds drew a veil across Mount Fuji and the European Group C invasion was over for another year.

Bob Constanduros

FUJI 1000 KMS

World Endurance Championship for Makes, round six
Date: October 2, 1983
Original distance: 230 laps of 4.359 kms (2.709 miles) circuit, 1002.57 kms, 622.967 miles
Actual distance: 225 laps of 4.359 kms circuit, 980.775 kms, 609.424 miles
Weather: overcast and cloudy during pre-practice, increasingly sunny on practice and race days, warm
Attendance: 83,000 spectators

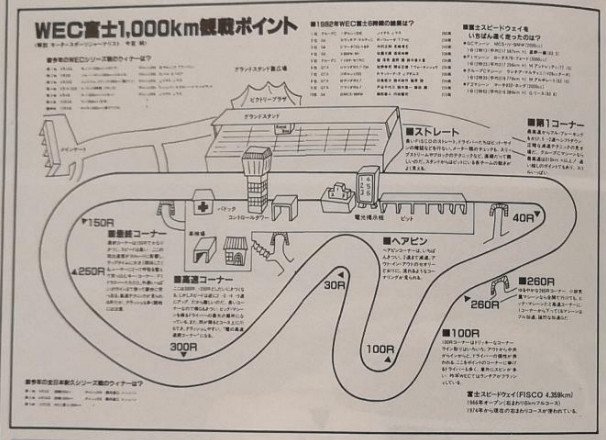
STARTING GRID

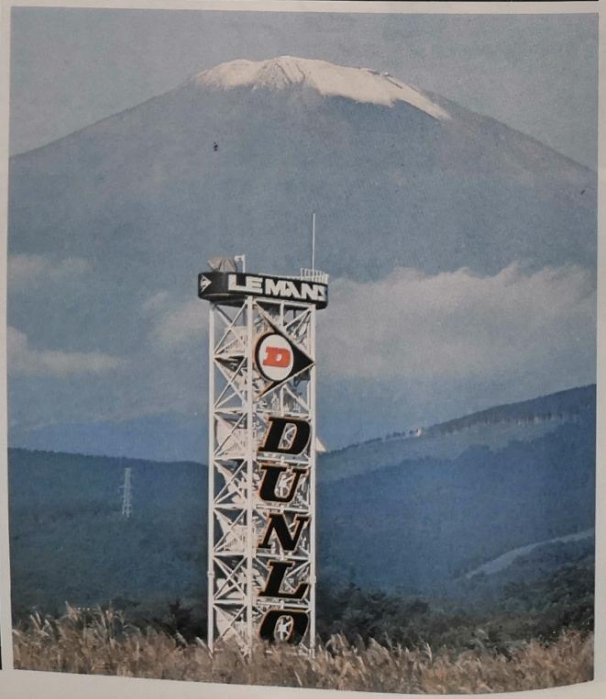
1. Porse 956 Ickx/Mass 1m 10.51s	**2. Porse 956 Bell/Bellof 1m 10.02s**
12. Porsche 956 Wollek/Heyer/Merl 1m 11.69s	3. Porsche 956 Pescarolo/Boutsen 1m 11.34s
8. Porsche 956 Schickentanz/Kengi Takahashi 1m 13.19s	6. Porsche 956 Fujita/Schuppan 1m 11.98s
17. Toyota-Dome/TOM'S 83C K. Matsumoto/Kaora Hoshino/Sekiya 1m 13.50s	23. Nissan-March 83G Kazuyoshi Hoshino/A. Hagiwara 1m 13.29s
7. Ford DFL-Dome RC83 Needell/Elgh 1m 14.12s	48. Porsche 956 Henn/Kunimitsu Takahashi/Paul Jnr 1m 13.89s
63. Giannini-Alba Finotto/Facetti 1m 18.14s	20. Nissan-LM03C Yanagida/Wada/Tomioka 1m 14.13s
21. Porsche 956 Johansson/Alliot 1m 19.00s	62. Mazda-March MCS1 Totani/Akaike 1m 18.83s
10. Nissan-Skyline turbo C Hasemi/Tohira 1m 19.86s	65. BMW-Lotec MIC Lotterschmid/Nagasaki/K. Suzuki 1m 19.05s
88. BMW-March MCS1 Motohashi/A. Suzuki 1m 20.69s	16. Mazda 717C Terada/Yoshino/Dieudonne 1m 20.57s
81. Toyota-March MCS1 Misaki/Nakamura 1m 21.57s	46. BMW-Sauber C7 Ballabio/Welti 1m 21.27s
181. Mazda RX7 Seino/Kitagawa/Nakajima 1m 26.41s	121. Mazda RX7 Oguchi/Fujimura 1m 25.49s
180. Mazda RX7 Shiratori/S. Suzuki/Ihara 1m 27.95s	120. Mazda RX7 H. Okada/Morimoto/S. Okada 1m 26.89s
123. Mazda RX7 Ohya/Katsuki/Ishikawa 1m 28.27s	182. Mazda RX7 Arai/Y. Hagiwara 1m 28.08s
125. Mazda RX7 Sawada/Okamoto/Sugiyama 1m 29.10s	130. Mazda RX7 Itabashi/Tabata 1m 29.00s
125. Mazda RX7 Y. Matsumoto/Shimegi/Ogura 1m 29.27s	133. Mazda RX7 Kusano/Isozaki/Furusawa 1m 29.15s
136. Nissan Fairlady Nagata/Miyagawa 1m 29. 92s	122. Toyota Celica Hitomi/Koma 1m 29.73s
*102. Nissan 240RS Shibuya/Aiba 1m 32.52s	171. Nissan Sunny LZ14 Jitsukawa/Sekine 1m 31.62s

* Did not start, driver ill

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1982: Jacky Ickx/Jochen Mass (Porsche 956)





RESULTS

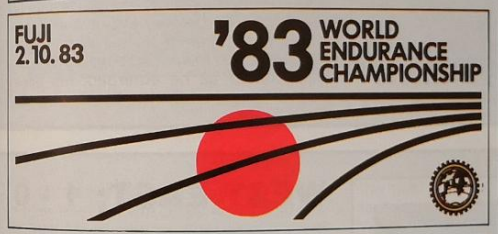
1. Porsche 956 (Bell/Bellof), 225 laps, 980.775 kms (609.424 miles) in 4 hrs 57m 06.36s, 198.066 km/h (123.072 mph)

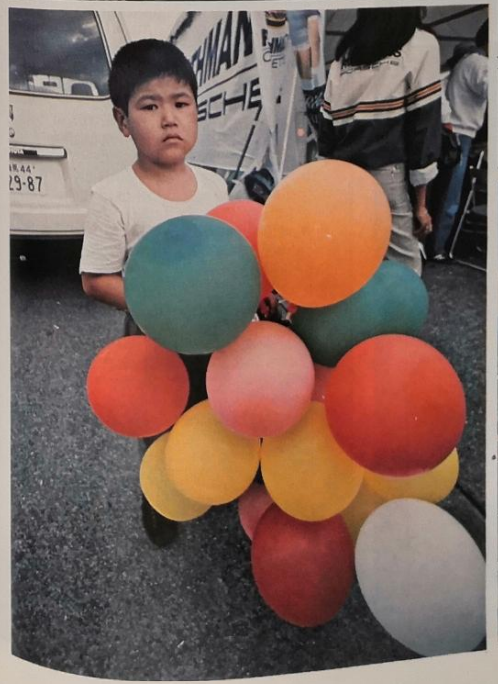
2. Porsche 956	Ickx/Mass	224 laps
3. Porsche 956	Fujita/Schuppan	219 laps
4. Porsche 956	Pescarolo/Boutsen	218 laps
5. Porsche 956	Wollek/Heyer/Merl	209 laps
6. Porsche 956	Schickentanz/Takahashi	203 laps
7. Nissan-March 83G	Hoshino/Hagiwara	198 laps
8. Toyota-March MCS1	Misaki/Nakamura	198 laps
9. Toyota-Dome/TOM'S 83C	Matsumoto/Hoshino/Sekiya	196 laps
10. BMW-Sauber C7	Ballabio/Welti	196 laps
11. Giannini-Alba	Finotto/Facetti	190 laps
12. Mazda RX7*	Shiratori/Suzuki/Ihara	179 laps
13. Toyota Celica*	Hiomi/Koma	177 laps
14. Mazda RX7*	Ohya/Katsuki/Ishikawa	169 laps
15. Mazda RX7*	Seino/Kitagawa	163 laps
Ford DFL-Dome RC83	Elgh/Needell	148 laps/Not classified
Mazda RX7*	Shimegi/Ogura	142 laps/Not classified
Mazda RX7*	Okada/Morimoto/Okada	122 laps/retired
Mazda RX7*	Itabashi/Tabata	117 laps/Not classified
Mazda RX7*	Kusano/Isozaki/Furusawa	98 laps/retired
Porsche 956	Johansson/Alliot	92 laps/retired oil leak
Mazda RX7*	Sawada/Okamoto/Sugiyama	90 laps/retired
Nissan-LM03C	Yanagida/Wada	89 laps/excluded, oil fill
Nissan-Skyline turbo C	Hasemi/Tohira	88 laps/retired oil leak
Nissan Sunny LZ 14	Jitsukawa/Sekine	81 laps/excluded
Mazda-March MCS1	Totani/Akaike	81 laps/retired gearbox
Nissan Fairlady*	Nagata/Miyagawa	76 laps/Not classified
Porsche 956	Henn/Takahashi/Paul	64 laps/retired, accident damage
Mazda RX7*	Oguchi/Fujimura	64 laps/retired
BMW-March MCS1	Motohashi/Suzuki	57 laps/retired, overheating
Mazda 717C	Terada/Yorino/Dieudone	24 laps/retired, engine
BMW-Lotec M1C	Lotterschmid/Nagasaka/Suzuki	19 laps/retired, engine
Mazda RX7*	Arai/Hagiwara	11 laps/retired

* Entered in GT Japan class, not eligible for WEC points

LAP LEADERS

Laps 1 to 16: Porsche 956 (Bellof/Bell)
Laps 17 to 20: Porsche 956 (Mass/Ickx)
Laps 21 to 38: Porsche 956 (Bellof/Bell)
Laps 39 to 40: Porsche 956 (Mass/Ickx)
Laps 41: Porsche 956 (Boutsen/Pescarolo)
Laps 42 to 59: Porsche 956 (Bellof/Bell)
Laps 60 to 82: Porsche 956 (Ickx/Mass)
Laps 83 to 84: Porsche 956 (Bell/Bellof)
Laps 85 to 124: Porsche 956 (Ickx/Mass)
Laps 125 to 129: Porsche 956 (Bell/Bellof)
Laps 130 to 179: Porsche 956 (Ickx/Mass)
Laps 180 to 202: Porsche 956 (Bell/Bellof)
Laps 203 to 206: Porsche 956 (Ickx/Mass)
Laps 207 to 225: Porsche 956 (Bell/Bellof)



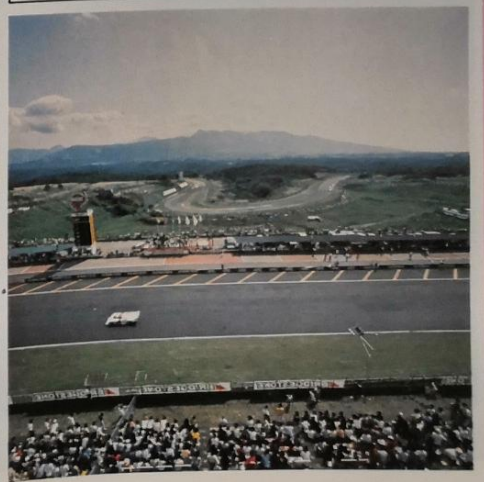


WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP (DRIVERS)

1. Ickx 85 pts; **2.** Bell 74 pts; **3.** Mass 70 pts; **4.** Wollek 64 pts; **5.** Bellof 55 pts; **6.** Boutsen 44 pts; **7.** Lässig and Plankenhorn 42 pts; **9.** Schuppan 40 pts; **10.** Fitzpatrick 37 pts; **11.** Johansson 36 pts; **12.** Lammers 35 pts; **13.** Heyer 30 pts; **14.** Hobbs 29 pts; **15.** Schickentanz 28 pts; **16.** Holberg 24 pts; **17.** Haywood and Gröhs 20 pts; **19.** Meri 18 pts; **20.** Palmer 15 pts; **21.** Rosbert, Stommelen, Mario Andretti, Michael Andretti, Alliot and Fujita 12 pts; **27.** Dören 11 pts; **28.** Brun, Stuck, Barth, De Narvaez and Pescarolo 10 pts; **33.** Lloyd 9 pts; **34.** Jones, Sigala, Larrauri, Edwards, Keegan and Regout 8 pts; **40.** Hamelmann and Gall 7 pts; **42.** Needell, Dron, Cleare, Ludwig, Utz, Haldi, Francia, Barilla, Patrese and Takahashi 6 pts; **52.** Mallock, Salmon, Finotto, Facetti, Winther, Mercer, Braun, Jürgensen, Memminger, Kuhn-Weiss, Steckkönig, Wilson, Fabi, Kazuyoshi Hoshino and Hagiwara 4 pts; **67.** Truffo, Sigala, Schornstein, Martin, Winter, Misaki and Nakamura 3 pts; **74.** Alboreto, Garcia, Naon, Montoya, Matsumoto, Kaoru Hoshino and Sekiya 2 pts; **81.** Henn, Ballot-Lena, Schlesser, Sotty, Cuynet, Bertapelle, Ballabio and Welti 1 pt.

WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP (MAKES)

1. Porsche 104 pts; **2.** Lancia 17 pts; **3.** Aston Martin and Nissan-March 4 pts; **5.** Toyota-March and BMW-Sauber 3 pts; **7.** Giannini Alba, BMW and Toyota-Dome 2 pts; **10.** BMW-URD 1 pt.



EXTRA, EXTRA

INSTANT REBUILD

"I've never seen a car so destroyed," said Philippe Alliot ruefully after the first practice session at Fuji. He'd turned into the flat-in-fifth final corner — and his Porsche 956 had just gone straight on. There were some who said that he'd turned in too late into this very important corner, a corner without apexes, but the young Parisian wasn't disputing any such claims. It was as though he was too embarrassed. After all, he'd just done what he thought was irrepairable damage to a £160,000 racing car Lloyds of London had refused to insure.

The Kremer brother's 956 looked like a write-off. Alliot had thumped hard into the barrier and the car had tipped forwards onto the armco — on its roof. Philippe couldn't believe it. *"It was amazing that I could have escaped from such a wreck,"* he said when the Porsche had been brought back to the pits.

It wasn't towed, however, it was carried. The gearbox — and that includes the rear suspension and wheels — had been ripped clean away. The windscreen had been shattered and the front left corner was badly damaged. Outside the Kremer pit, a sorry pile of pink and white bodywork looked as though it was waiting to be picked up by garbage men.

But it was that pink and white livery that was to ensure that the Kremer Porsche would be on the grid next morning. Pink and white are the colours of Ryoji Hayashi, president of Italian design, a Japanese (!) fashion house. He's a friendly if serious rival of Yoshiho Matsuda and if Matsuda was going to be in the race with his Porsche 956, so was Hayashi. Both had their museums, and the Kremer 956 was destined for Hayashi's after the race.

But at that stage, the Kremer brothers considered it an unlikely starter.

Erwin and Manfred are perfectionists. If the job of straightening a bent racing car can't be done properly, it isn't worth doing. Alliot and his talented partner Stefan Johansson would be out of a drive.

But it was important that Stefan should race at Fuji. After all, at that time, no one was carrying the hopes of Japan in Formula 1 except Stefan. His good friend, former neighbour and fellow Scandinavian Keke Rosberg had not yet raced the Williams-Honda. So Stefan was a national hero in Japan — albeit temporarily. Ortwin Podlech (yes, the same manager as Keke) was in Japan looking for some good Japanese deals to increase Stefan's earning potential next year.

But when it looked as though Stefan might not be racing, Ortwin and Hayashi both engaged second gear. Hayashi went for the Porsche factory team. Would they consider lending the third and spare Porsche 956? Surprisingly, they had a already refused John Fitzpatrick Racing, and now they would do the same to Kremer. Podlech put into action plan B. If Hayashi's deal didn't happen, Stefan would qualify in the Yokohama-sponsored Walter Brun 956.

But there were other forces at work. Hayashi had investigated the possibility of repairing the 956. A small financial discussion preceeded the operation, but it was arranged that spares would be bought from the stock brought to Fuji by the factory team, and that a certain amount of money would change hands. For the Kremers to claim start money, their car would have to be healthy enough to race, but that could cost 200,000 Deutschmarks in spare parts alone.

The deal was struck, and suddenly Erwin and Manfred Kremer, their four-strong crew and reserve driver, this year's German F3 champion Franz Konrad, were hard at work. Mercifully, the monocoque was untouched and so was the engine. New bodywork, four corners, gearbox and bodywork were all purchased through Porsche's spares boss Gerd Schmidt, who stayed awake all that night to supply the team. The brother's four man crew worked *"quick, quick, quick, we only took 15 minutes off to eat,"* according to Manfred Kremer as he emerged, his eyes squinting against the bright morning sun on Sunday. The engine, cleaned of dust and fire extinguishant, had been started at 4.30 that morning. The repair was finished. *"It wasn't as good as we would have liked,"* admitted Manfred, *"but it was OK. The cooling on the left hand side wasn't quite as it should be, and the bodywork could have fitted better,"* admitted Manfred. But according to the drivers, it felt fine. If you had to have a trackside rebuild, you can certainly trust the Kremers.

Foulon/DPPI

At the start of the race, Stefan quickly rose from his lowly 14th position on the grid to sixth place within 20 laps. He maintained that position until handing over to Alliot, but just before the two hour mark, the car came into the pits with smoke trailing behind it. *"We changed the oil tank after the accident, but it seems there was a leak in the new one. The oil pressure dropped and there was a lot of smoke,"* said Manfred Kremer. *"At least we lasted two hours,"* added Erwin.

After such hard work, the Kremer men were happy to go off to sleep. The Porsche was packed up, but rather than find its way to a private museum, the Kremers had decided to take it home, *"to rebuild it properly. Then we might take it to Kyalami."* Quite when Mr Hayashi will get his museum-piece wasn't sure, but he may rest assured that it will be in excellent condition when he gets it.

Bob Constanduros

Foulon/DPPI

WEST-EAST: 1 - 0

It was the most complete confrontation to date. The West lined up in Porsche 956s and Sauber. The East had its 956s, but there were no fewer than six interesting home-grown machines. Five relied on locally-built four-cylinder turbo engines: three Nissans and two Toyotas. The sixth was powered by the ubiquitous Cosworth DFL, *"rebuilt in Japan and as smooth as anything,"* said driver Tiff Needell.

The chassis were basically either Domes or monocoques supplied by the Le Mans company. The Domes are common enough in Europe. The company first came to Le Mans five years ago and that early model has been converted many times, most recently being driven by Englishmen Nick Mason and Chris Craft and run by John Macdonald's RAM Racing.

The new Dome (it means 'Childhood Dream' in Japanese) is once again the design of Minoru Hayashi, who hired Needell and Eje Elgh to drive it in Japan's six race Endurance championship. It is sponsored by Autobacs auto accessories. It is still recognisably a Dome, with low roofline, what appears to be a tiny screen, and an attractive, long, flared rear end. Unfortunately, a broken front suspension rocker badly delayed the car in the race and it wasn't classified.

The two Toyota-powered cars were both carried away from the circuit on the back of flat trucks. First to go was Tetsu Ikuzawa's brand new model, which caught fire during Friday's unofficial practice because of what was almost certainly a broken fuel line, such was the ferocity of the flames. Tetsu and the owner of the second car, Nobuhide Tachi, had been entrusted with the engines by Toyota: they had both opted for Dome chassis.

TOM'S Toyota continued to show promise throughout the weekend. Its great advantage was its remarkably frugal fuel consumption. The Rothmans 956s came in for fuel around the 40 lap mark, taking on 91.5 litres (Mass/Ickx) and 87 litres (Bellof/Bell). The remaining Toyota came in eight laps later and took on only 80 litres of fuel. At one hundred laps, the local car was holding fourth place: but for a collision which damaged the nose cone, it might have finished even higher. Although Preston Henn's Porsche 956 was forbidden to run (on safety grounds) with an exposed wheel following a nose damaging collision, the Toyota was permitted to continue despite having sustained similar damage. However, another nose arrived from Dome's nearby workshops soon afterwards, although it took some while to fit.

The Toyota has proved to be the most competitive of the Japanese cars in the national endurance series. It was intended to make just three fuel stops at Fuji to Porsche's four, and that allowed it to lead the Schuppan/Fujita Porsche 956 in the most recent of the national long distance races until the three-quarter mark. When fuel consumption becomes more strict next year, it will be in with a real chance. The engine has two valves per cylinder and a single turbo feeding twin inlets. It was a shame that both Toyotas should come to such expensive ends, for the TOM'S car ultimately brought the race to a halt when a tyre blew on the pit straight.

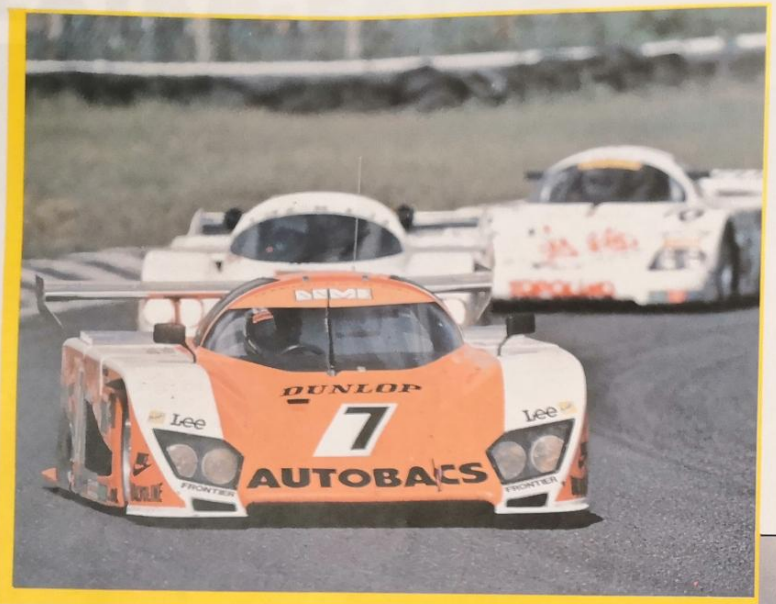
Highest-placed all-Japanese entry was the Nissan-March 83G, if you discount the fact that Marches are built in Oxfordshire, England. Nissan have given engines to three of their ex-drivers, and asked them to find the ideal solution for Japan's series of six endurance races. In each, the well-known Le Mans company (importer of March cars) has become involved. The company built the Nissan Skyline turbo C that went to Kyalami at the end of last year, and was Masahiro's Hasemi's solution to Group C. The car is front-engined, and its engine behaved badly for most of the race having qualified a lowly 16th.

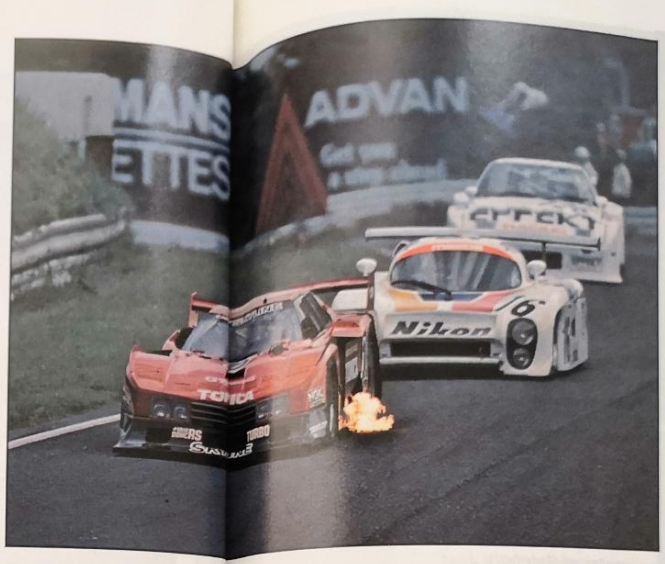
Haruhito Yanagida asked the Le Mans company to build his Nissan LMO3C, which is sponsored by Coca Cola and run by the Central 20 Racing team. It qualified 11th and certainly looks the part, but Wada had just taken over the wheel from the car's owner when he went off onto the grass and a new nose cone was required. However, the end came when the oil cooler broke. It was replaced, but more oil had to be added before it was permitted by the regulations, and the car was disqualified.

The one car that appears capable of taking on the Toyotas and Porsches at home is Kazuyoshi Hoshino's Nissan-March 83G. Kazuyoshi may be 36 years old, but he is a very formidable competitor in the Japanese Formula 2 series and is generally known as the "hard man" of national racing. He did this year's Donington Formula 2 race in a March.

Hoshino ordered his 83G at the beginning of the year. It turned competitive times in testing at Goodwood before being shipped to Japan, already fitted with 520 bhp Nissan engine. It was no surprise to find Hoshino's March the first non-Porsche on the grid in seventh spot, but although second driver Hagiwara took it easy during the opening stint, the car eventually finished where it started, in seventh place behind six Porsches. Hagiwara was caught out by the lack of braking of the turbo engine and he thumped into a slower car. His March was one of many Group C cars requiring frontal attention during the race. The Nissan engine was slightly less thirsty than the Porsche, but more than the Toyota. It will be interesting to see developments during the next six months — until Le Mans. The Japanese have a yard stick of Porsches in the country now, and it will be interesting to see how the local companies react. Nissan already has a 3-litre V6 engine with turbocharger: will this be a Porsche beater?

Bob Constanduros

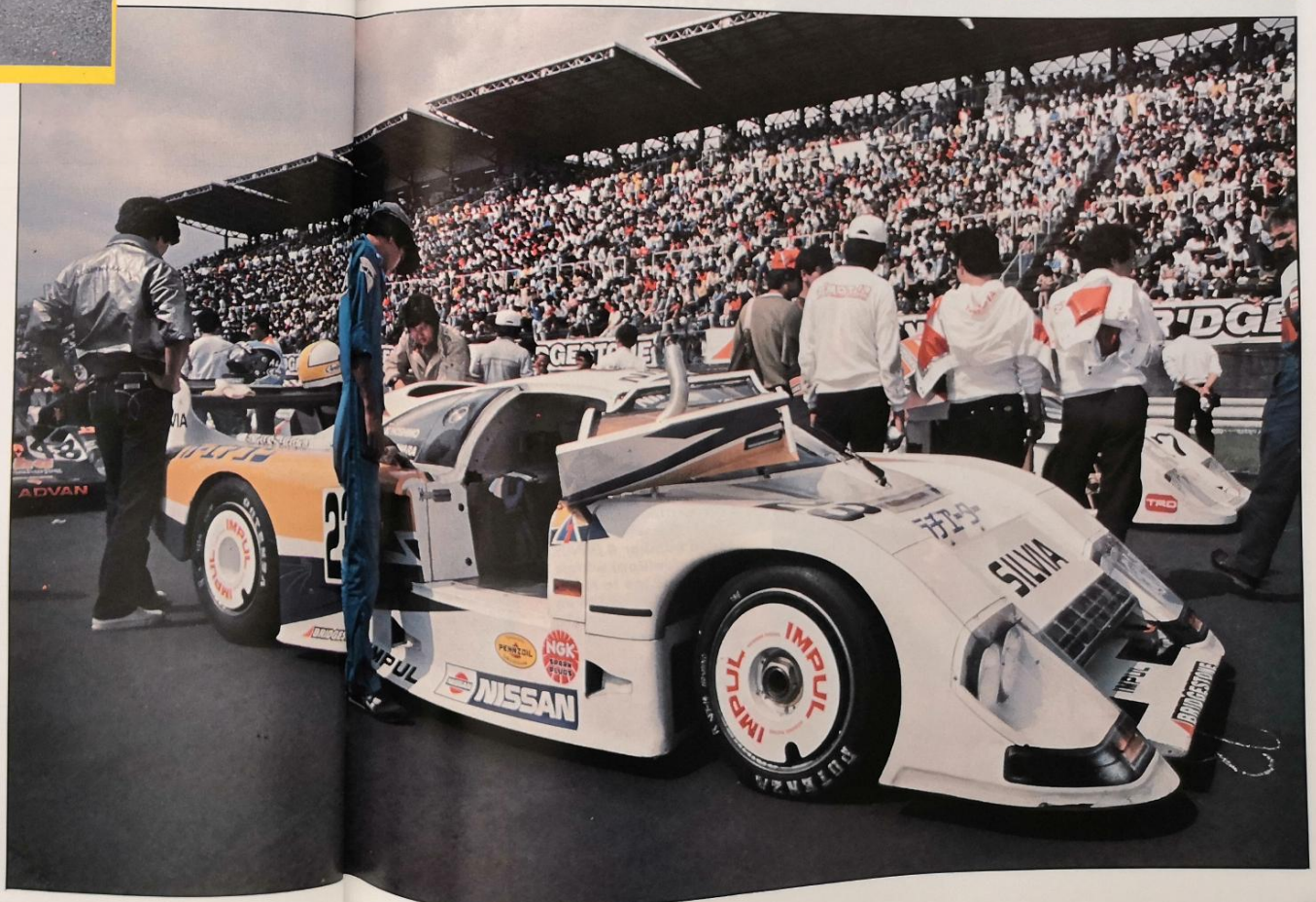




Yanagida/Wada/Tomioka and the Nissan Skyline (10) of Hasemi/Tohira, seen in the Kyalami Nine hours last year and described in our December 1982 issue, tried to challenge the might of Stuttgart with varying degrees of success.
Three of the home-grown Group C cars finished behind the leading six Porsche 956s, which leads one to wonder just when they will be ready to tackle a full world championship programme. The 1984 season isn't far away, but some of the cars, at least, could well be seen at Le Mans next year.
(photos: Foulon/DPPI)

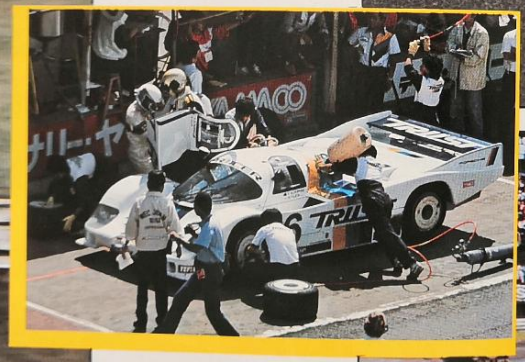
JAPANESE FAN

One can only hope that Nissan-Datsun and Toyota were encouraged by their representation in the Fuji 1000 Kilometers. Unlike their Mazda colleagues, their participation is only semi-official, but even that can only augur well for the championship which is so desperately waiting for Porsche to be seriously challenged. The industrial might of these Japanese companies, their strong financial position and desire to sell even more cars in Europe could well lead to a serious attempt to knock Porsche off the Group C pedestal. Tentative steps were taken at Fuji where the Cosworth-powered Dome RC83 (7) of Needell/Elgh, Toyota-Dome 83C(17) of Matsumoto/Hoshino/Sekiya, the Nissan-March 83G (bottom right) of Hoshino/Hagiwara, the Nissan LM03C (above left) of



STRANGE COLOURS

There were nine Porsche 956s in the entry list for the 1000Kms at Fuji, and five of them had all the qualities required to get the photographers focussing their cameras, for some had just been repainted in new colour schemes and others have never been seen in Europe. The only 956s to appear in familiar livery were the two works Rothmans cars, John Fitzpatrick's J.David example and the New Man (French clothing) entry of Reinhold Jöst. The red and black number 8, which belongs to the Swiss



driver Walter Brun, was in the hands of Schickentanz/Takahashi. The white long-tailed number 6 (seen refuelling) which belongs to Nova Engineering of Tokyo has completed a Japanese season in the hands of Fujita/Schuppan. The pink and white number 21 which belongs to the Kremer brothers, sponsored by businessman Ryoji Hayashi, was taken over by Johansson/Alliot. The blue and white number 3 belonging to the enormously wealthy Yoshiho Matsuda was shared by Pescarolo and Boutsen, who first

learned to appreciate each other's abilities when they raced a Rondeau here last year. Finally, the red and

black number 48 is the Preston Henn car which ran in GPI's colours at Brands Hatch, shared by its genial Floridan entrant with Takahashi and Paul Jnr, the 1982 IMSA champion. Colourful or not, none of these beauties had the speed to threaten the factory cars, and the memories they left behind were more aesthetic than triumphant.
(photos: Foulon/DPPI & Teissèdre/DPPI)

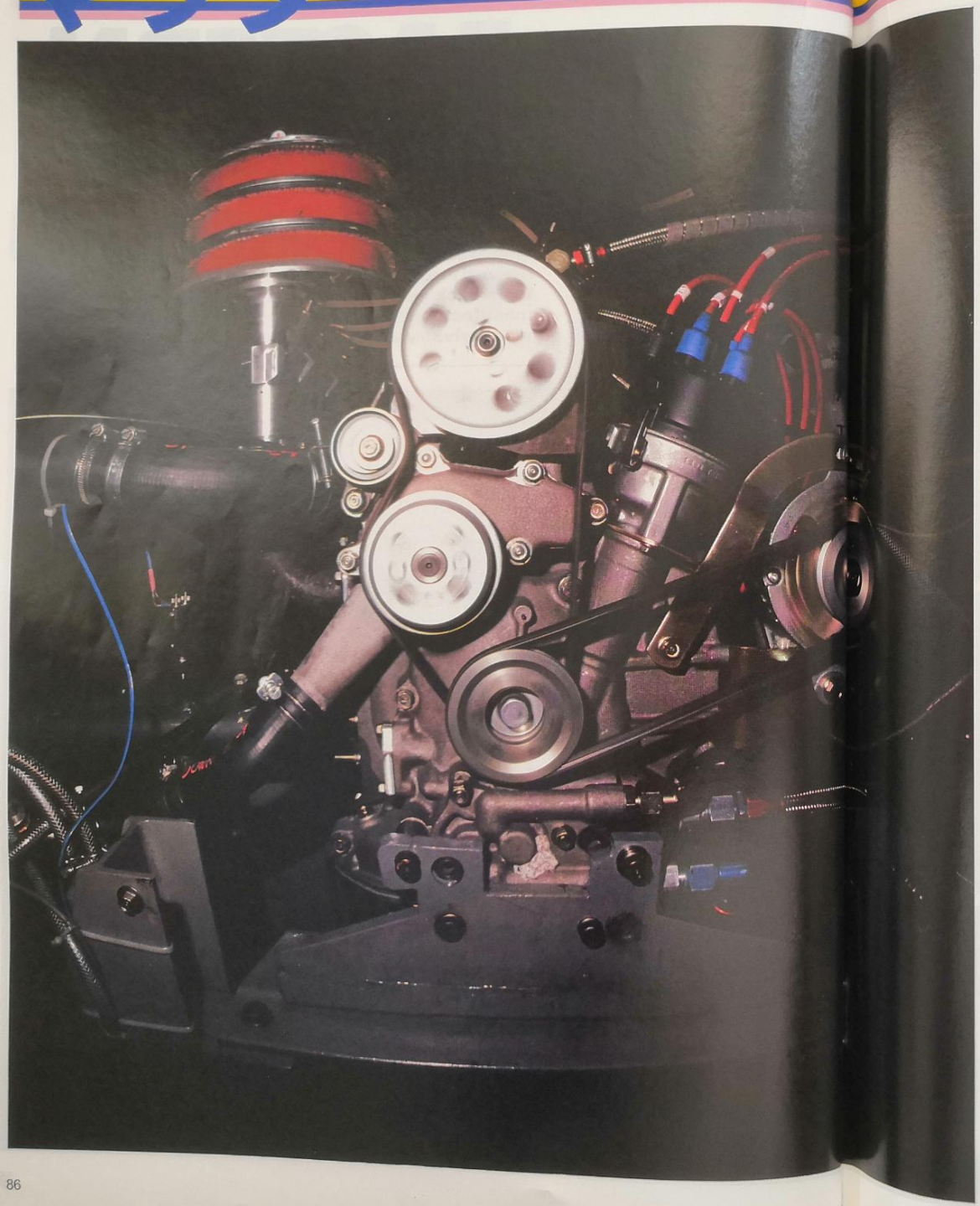
マツダ

EASTERN PROMISE

Takayoshi Ohashi is almost a regular at Le Mans these days. Japan to France may be a long way, but Ohashi so approves of the Group C Endurance formula and the challenge of the 24 hour classic that he brings his Mazdaspeed team back year after year. And if other major Japanese manufacturers follow his example, so much the better. He wants rivalry and competition, whatever the source.

by Bob Constanduros

マツダ



Squat, dumpy and rounded, the Mazda 717Cs look like little bombs, and with engines developing over 300 bhp, they are competitive in Group C Junior. Unfortunately their programme is limited to Silverstone, Le Mans and Fuji. (photos: Yojiro Terada and Foulon/DPPI; preceding double page spread: Jean-Yves Ruszniewski)

It is the Le Mans 24 hour race that has brought the name of Mazdaspeed to the attention of Endurance fans. Mr Ohashi and Mazdaspeed are almost regular Le Mans competitors, first racing the Group 6 Syma there in 1974 (it lasted ten hours) and culminating in a class win in Group C Junior this year. But Ohashi's real quest, of course, is to promote the name of Mazda. As such, Mr Ohashi runs one of the most cosmopolitan of Japanese factory racing teams.

Ohashi is now the man behind Mazdaspeed. The team originates from the foresight of Nobuhide Ito, a man originally charged with a dealer combine formed by the Mazda parent company Toyo Kogyo, or TKK as it is sometimes known. Ito recognised that Mazda's powerful rotary engine had competition potential and he formed a competitions arm of his company to prove his point. That was in 1964, and the man he chose to run the company was Takayoshi Ohashi.

Ohashi comes from one of Japan's aristocratic families and was born in the smart part of Tokyo. He went to university and graduated in business studies. Happily for him, he was a second son, for the first son nearly always follows in his father's footsteps according to Japanese tradition. The second son is more free to chose his own profession. Ohashi first of all went racing, and then settled down to working for Mazda Auto Toyko when he discovered that racing cars wasn't everything he expected it to be. In 1964 Ito established Ohashi in his newly formed competitions department (soon to become Mazdaspeed): two years later, Ito himself was transferred to TKK's Hiroshima headquarters as director of sales, where he can oversee Mazdaspeed's activities. He remains very much the "father" of TKK's competitions programmes.

The compagny's operations began quite modestly with various saloon cars in national races. But it was the success of the Mazda RX3 which promoted Mazda to international racing. Its first professionally-built racing car was the Sygma which went to Le Mans in 1974. While that year became a sporting milestone, it was also a year of financial gloom as the fuel crisis began to bite.

However, the RX7 got the company back on its feet and Mazdaspeed went even further by developing it for competitions use. In the States, MANA, the Mazdaspeed equivalent, has produced a large range of performance parts, encouraging a vast number of drivers to use the RX7 in IMSA GTU racing.

It was the RX7, too, which was the base for Ohashi's next European invasion. That came in 1979 with the 252, a modified RX7 in Group Five trim which failed to qualify at Le Mans. It was two years before Mazdaspeed returned to France again, this time with two more modified RX7s with long tails running once again in Group 5 with the 253 code name. Both cars retired again, but they were back again the next year, this time code-named 254 and running in IMSA GTX, a more traditional home for Group 5. While one retired with electrical problems, the other finished 14th, Mazda's first Le Mans finish.

There is no doubt that this result helped Mazda to initiate the building of Mazdaspeed's own Group C for Le Mans, but why is this French race so important to Ohashi and his directors? *"There is no other race in the world that has quite the status of Le Mans,"* says Mr Ohashi. *"It is unique, and not even the other Group C races have the same allure. The other thing is that Le Mans instigated the fuel consumption regulation, which is a responsible philosophy for mankind. We are behind that philosophy. If, in the future (and it seems likely), there are more Japanese teams taking part in the 24 hours, then I shall be pleased that I have promoted this race. Formula 1 is simply about speed, whereas Group C has more of a social conscience."* As chairman of the racing committee of the Japanese Federation, Ohashi will be trying to get some of his

fellow competitions directors to travel to France. There is already a strong likelihood that Toyota and Nissan will follow with their Group C machines.

But the very act of persuading his directors to spend a year's budget on one single race is in itself a major achievement. The project was already in hand at the end of last year and the two cars that came to Le Mans in 1983 were a product of a remarkable network of experts and engineers. The two principals were Hiroshi Miyasaki of Fortran Co. Ltd. who designed the chassis and suspension and Takuya Yura, president of the Mooncraft company, who was responsible for the body design. The engine, of course, would be Mazda's usual 2.6 litre rotary, and Mazdaspeed's expert on this occasion was Kunio Matsuura who worked for the engine division of the engine technology development section of Toyo Kogyo.

Each of these men had their own problems to overcome for the Le Mans assault in the building of their own particular elements. However, each would help the other. Everyone had the base of the 254 to work from, and this was particularly true of Matsuura who also had the all-important fuel consumption figures to calculate.

With the help of the other two engineers, he calculated that the car should be able to lap in the 4m 10s bracket during the race, which would mean a fuel consumption figure of 3.4 kilometers per litre of fuel. However, in previous years, the 253 had returned figures of 3.0 kilometers and the 254 set figures of 2.7 kilometers per litre. *"Obviously, these figures would have to be improved upon,"* says Katsuura.

マツダ

"One was to improve the on-the-go fuel consumption by making the car as light as possibe, reducing aerodynamic drag and improving the fuel efficiency of the engine." All these engineers had these factors in mind, and no doubt the lessons learned from their success and failures will influence next year's car.

For a start, Matsuura's fuel consumption figures were never achieved. That was for a number of reasons, but firstly, the car was never on the weight limit although it was 150 kilos lighter than the 254. It was 80 kilos overweight, because, says Matsuura, *"it was our first Junior Group C car, we didn't have long to build it or test it, we wanted to incorporate safety margins and we also wanted to finish the race at*

all costs. Aerodynamically, it had a Cd figure of 0.28, which is excellent, and it contributed considerably to improved fuel economy.

"The engine, of course, affects the economy itself. The base engine was the 13B as used the previous year, but the carburettor was replaced by Bosch fuel injection. The consumption was only 3.16 kilometers per litre, worse than we had hoped. This was because of a mistake in setting the fuel injection. The mixture was set lean in consideration of fuel economy, but this made the gearshift operation difficult during changing down. In countering this, the mixture had to be made at least ten per cent richer..."

Matsuura had taken another step to ensure that his drivers got the most from a tankful of gas. A specially designed collector tank, a high performance tank and a compact computer-linked gauge were all incorporated so that each driver knew when there were just five litres of fuel left. In testing, this gauge was found to have an accuracy of about one per cent error.

Takuya Yura of the Mooncraft company which designed the Madza's bodywork set himself some tough targets. *"We wanted to qualify with a time of 3m 49s, to reach a top speed of 310 kph (192 mph) and to finish in the top ten. In fact, we didn't succeed in any of those goals, but I was particularly upset not to achieve the first two.*

"The concept behind the 717C was to use the relatively low engine power to the greatest effect. The way to do that was to keep the Cd × S (coefficient of drag × front area) of 1.715 meters which meant that the crucial CD × S figure was under O.5."

Mazdaspeed's effort began with equipment being shipped to British engineer Alan Docking's base as Silverstone so that one car could participate in the *Grand Pirx International* 1000 Kms as a shakedown run. There it qualified ahead of the sophisticated Giannini-Alba, until a wheel-nut jammed and put it out of the race. The stage was now set for a two-pronged attack on Le Mans, a campaign which would embrace a doubling of Mazdaspeed's normal 20 strong staff to 40, and a total expenditure of $300,000. For some, such as Ohashi, the form was familiar and the traditionally autocratic French scrutineers' demands were met with typically Eastern obedience and politesse.

Hiroshi Miyasaka, the chassis designer, was making his first visit to Le Mans, however. *"I found out just how difficult it was for both the car and driver to race there, to drive at more than 300 kph for more than a minute, as well as the difficulty of racing on such a narrow track with undulations inthe road surfaces, lower friction than on closed circuits and narrow escape roads. Everything was something that you could not experience in Japan. I began to have my doubts about my design. The severity of the scrutineering was also quite astonishing and the 717C didn't pass on the first day."*

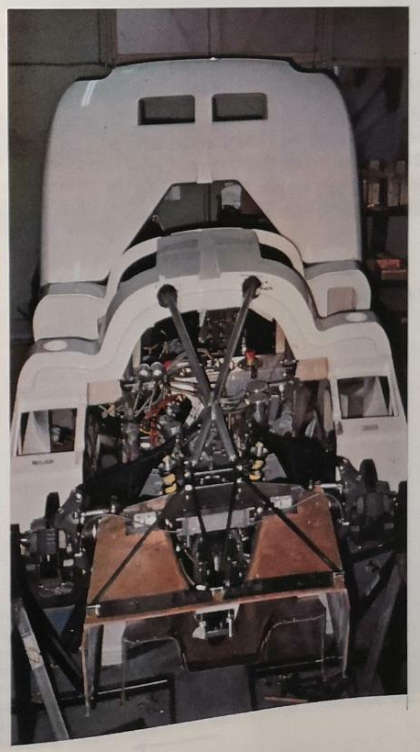
The race, of course, went well for the Japanese team. They finished first and second in Group C Junior, the second-placed car being seriously delayed for over an hour after a punctured tyre had wrecked the rear bodywork. But in spite of their success, the Japanese held a post-mortem as to just why their car had not lived up to their expectations. It had been fractionally slower on the straight then expected and the English drivers, in particular, complained of handling problems.

"At first we suspected that the engine was not developing the specified 300 bhp," reported Yura, *"and indeed, the induction pod was not working effectively, reducing the power output. The other thing we suspected was an increase in the Cd × S figure. The front area had been increased when we had to replace the exterior rear mirrors demanded by the regulations, which we had misinterpreted. The drag coefficient had increased when we put an air inlet opening in the side window to let more fresh air into the cockpit. Consequently, the Cd × S figure was probably over O.5."*

Yura also appreciated that the team's lack of experience and the wrong tyres not only made handling difficult but placed an extra strain on the drivers as the cars were affected by virtually every surface irregularity. Large brakes were found to be unnecessary, and in fitting them, the unsprung weight had been increased. But in spite of these drawbacks, the team had still won the class and five separate awards .

A final word from Yura: *"Considering it was our first Group C effort, we thought that the car was up to standard with the rest of the world. But the rest of the world has been building even more sophisticated cars. The Alba, which is also in Group C Junior, had a carbon fibre monocoque chassis. The Lancia also uses lots of carbon fibre. Most of the new cars use new materials or new technology to some extent, and a number of outstanding innovations were to be seen. Although we are well aware of the new technology and materials, many of them are not available in Japan, and we lack the expertise to use them. In the same way that Formula 1 cars are becoming more expensive to build, Group C cars are also becoming more costly."*

The demands of Group C Junior are hard to meet, but Mazdaspeed's solution includes superb aerodynamics and fuel economy from the twin rotor Wankel engine. The former were studied by aerodynamicist Takuya Yura in a wind tunnel; Mazda's engine man is Kunio Matsuura; both suffered disappointments at Le Mans this year. (photos: Foulon/DPPI and Yojiro Terada)



Since Le Mans, Mazdaspeed has come under direct control of TKK, the parent body, but its base is still in Tokyo. It is there that the cars are prepared and customer work carried out. The engines are originally built at Hiroshima, but Mazdaspeed has its own dyno for testing engines. Amongst the 20 strong staff at the workshop are team drivers Yoshimi Katayama, Yojiro Terada and Takashi Yorino. Of these, probably the best known is Terada, the thickset mustachioed man with a fine sense of humour and excellent English. In his spare time, he photographs the workshops with the products of one of Mazdaspeed's essential sponsors, Nikon.

Ohashi has never intended the Mazdaspeed cars to tackle a large programme of races. The mystique of Le Mans, plus a shakedown at Silverstone and an end-of-season fling at home at Fuji are quite big enough programme for him. But that swansong under Mount Fuji this year was not a success. The team fitted the 717C with a big 100 litre tank and decided to race in the ordinary Group C class. *"There's so much of a handicap in Group C Junior,"* pointed out Ohashi at Fuji, *"and we wanted to find out the potential of the engine, because in Group C Junior you can't accelerate to the full as you can when you have a larger tank."* However, the 717C wasn't well-placed on the grid, and a jammed throttle caused the engine to over-rev early in the race.

Now Ohashi and his enthusiastic crew are looking to Le Mans again. *"We shall be basing ourselves with Alan Docking at Silverstone again and we will do the 1000 kilometers there again. I expect to run two cars at Le Mans and the same designers will be modifying the car considerably. We got good results from the wind tunnel tests last year and the Cd is low but I think we have to increase downforce.*

"As for the engine, I'm still not sure that turbocharging is the answer, particularly with fuel consumption having to be improved due to reduced tankage in 1984, from 100 litres in Group C to 85. On the other hand, that will mean that Group C Junior will have more of a chance to get good results as their tankage remains at 55 litres. We're still not sure which class we'll be in. We have run a turbocharged version of the engine, but we're still not certain as to our engine's specification for next season."

What is certain is that Mazda supports Group C, or more specifically, Le Mans. If there is an Eastern promise, it is that they will be at the Sarthe in June. They would like to be part of a Japanese invasion, for Ohashi will be trying to persuade his colleagues of the benefits of the operation. He'd even like to sell his Group C Junior cars to clients, and to swell the championship that way. And with Group C Endurance races gaining favour at home, there will be more and more opportunities to race in the future. And that can only be good for Group C Endurance racing. □

CHILD PRODIGY

The latest Ringmeister is still only a kid: away from the race track he helps his mum to run the family business. (photo: Asset)

Fifty miles north of Frankfurt there is a tiny village spread across the hillside overlooking Giessen. Surrounded by a neat garden stands a house, low and stylish, with an immaculate white Porsche 928S parked in the drive. The car belongs to Germany's latest racing hero, 26 year old Stefan Bellof, and the house belongs to his parents, with whom he still lives.

by Didier Braillon

Ever since his son was old enough to walk, Georg Bellof has inculcated in his son Stefan the traditional values of German culture: a sense of duty and honesty, combined with the appreciation of a job well done. Georg Bellof is a car body repairer by profession. He works with his hands, a job in which he has creative pride, and as soon as little Stefan had completed junior school it was made clear to him that a similar profession was being mapped out in his future. Car repair is the sort of job which gets handed down from father to son in this part of the world, and it had been going on for generations in the Bellof family.

At least it did until 1973, when a teenaged Stefan discovered his first racing kart. For seven years the baby racing machines were to become a major factor in the off-duty hours of the Bellof family, followed later by a Formula Ford and an F3 Ralt-Toyota belonging to the Bertram Schäfer team.

These racing cars made Bellof's name familiar but not necessarily famous: the credit for his accession to the ranks of Porsche works driver (of whom there are but four) belongs to Willi Maurer, the F2 entrant and constructor. From shy debutant to Golden Boy - albeit one who's reluctant to open himself up to the international press - has been a meteorically quick progression, all the more remarkable when one reflects that the Porsche factory had never before signed up a driver who didn't already have years and

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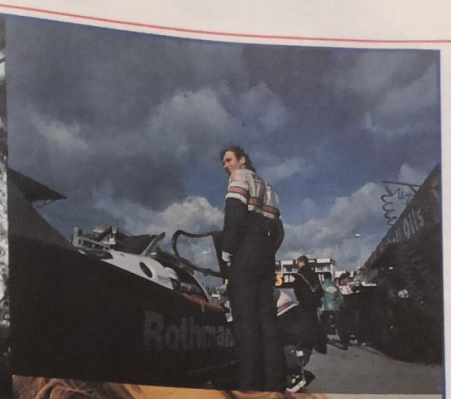
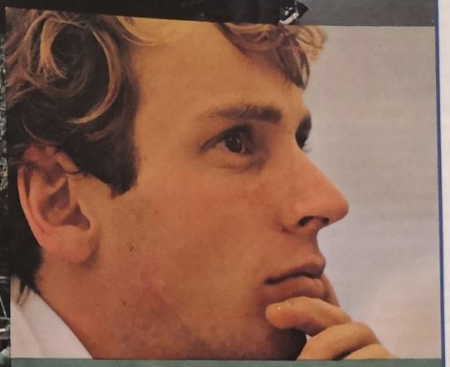
Road-going Porsche 928S and sunglasses: the status symbols of a rising star who's still on his way to the top. (photo: Asset)





When he's not racing, Stefan Bellof loves to come to the village near Giessen where his family lives. The racing hero that Germany has waited almost 50 years to discover is, at heart, a child prodigy without any hang-ups. (photos: Asset, Winter, First Line & DPPI)

years of top level racing experience. By signing the youngster the great factory effectively abandoned some long-entrenched principles. And as a result, Stefan has become a superstar in the making as far as the German nation is concerned.

Nevertheless, for the time being he wants to stay close to his roots. From time to time he has to step out of the house at his mother's request because she needs him, pencil in hand, to join her in the garage where she keeps the job lists and invoicing up to date for Bellof Repairs. Why change habits now? After all, it's something he's been used to doing since long before he became a celebrity. Life back home in Giessen is a calm, simple experience, barely compatible with the nationwide idolatry of the man with the blond curls whose attention our photographer is trying to capture as he asks him to pose for GPI's camera.

Last year, at Hockenheim, he had every man, woman and child on their feet in the famous Stadium as the took the lead, en route to scoring his second F2 victory in two races (his first two) for Maurer-BMW. It was the sort of reception that once was reserved only for Han-Joachim Stuck; to the German nation, a calm and well-ordered people who need heroes to look up to, this appeared to be the idol they had waited so long to see, regardless of the achievements of Jochen Mass or Manfred Winkelhock. Germany had to look back almost half a century, to the days of Mercedes Benz and Auto Union, to find a racing hero who fitted in as well as he does with the nationalist ideals of motorsport superiority.

From Rudolf Caracciola, Manfred von Brauchitsch, Hans Stuck Snr, Hermann Lang and Bernd Rosemeyer to Stefan Bellof is a giant step, one which the kid himself declines to accept. *"Porsche gave me the biggest opportunity of my life, that's all. For me it was the sort of opportunity that you probably only ever get once in a lifetime. When we signed the contract I didn't feel particularly impressed by the Porsche tradition or the national side of the thing. To begin with, I must admit, the main thing as far as I was concerned was that I was going to become an international 'name.' That was my first reaction..."*

At Porsche, on the other hand, they are more ready to talk about the matter, and racing chief Jürgen Barth has no hesitation in explaining why the company made the choice at the time. *"Manfred Jantke, our racing PR representative, was at Hockenheim for that F2 race. He saw Stefan's win and was very impressed, not necessarily by the result but by the way that he won: he felt that he had been watching a driver with that indefinable 'spark' which makes a great racing driver different from all the others. It was an opportunity which we felt we couldn't miss, so we approached him about driving for us. Porsche has a very high reputation in Germany, of course, and from a PR point of view we guessed that it was likely to be a very productive arrangement."*

Any nationalist fervour in those remarks is entirely understandable, for it is natural among most European countries these days to promote one's own countrymen. *"Germany is a major car producing nation, with seven big manufacturers. Unfortunately, while the French and the Italians have flooded Grand Prix racing with their young drivers, we have only a handful of representatives in the sport. It's not a healthy situation for our people, or for spectators here. It's entirely appropriate that we should take up the cause of national loyalty, because there's nothing to be ashamed about being German. That's why we at Porsche are going to organise a Porsche 944 one-make championship, just like manufacturers do in other countries. It is our intention to find young drivers for the future, the hopefuls who find it difficult to get the support they need, and a way to the top which will give them help and recognition."*

Right from his first race with Porsche, Stefan has been impressive. The results themselves aren't much to go by yet (his only Group C win so far was with Bell at Silverstone), but his speed most certainly has. This is the man who took pole position at Silverstone with a lap time of 1m 13.5s, almost two seconds faster than his team mates, and then staged a repeat performance at the Nürburgring, where he →

was more than 5.5 seconds a lap faster than the others. Taking a car like the Porsche round the fabulous 'Ring in 6m 11.13s is an almost incredible achievement, one which in fact was so remarkable that it instantly created doubts in the minds of some observers about Stefan. Naturally, he's heard the stories. *"There was some talk about outlandish boost pressures just for me, even of specially-built qualifying engines from Porsche. It is rubbish, but it's not my job to explain how I did those lap times."* Stefan discusses the matter calmly, with a shy smile, almost as if he finds it faintly shameful to have to explain something which he believes is normal. *"The cars are great, the engines always produce the same power, without any noticeable difference between them. As for these stories of special engines, that's complete bullshit. I'm not going to try and tell you that I'm quick because I'm young or because of my driving. After all, Jacky Ickx, Derek Bell and Jochen Mass have far more experience than I do, and that's supposed to count for something, isn't it?"*

Like those unfortunates during the Middle Ages whose outstanding qualities attracted allegations of sorcery, and later took them to be burned at the stake, Stefan has been dogged for 12 months by the suspicions of rivals who claim that he's always had "special" engines. It started in F2, when it seemed the only logical explanation for some prodigious feats must surely be something underhand.

"That first F1 victory at Silverstone was obviously lucky, because I only took the lead with two laps to go. At Hockenheim, though, we were the quickest: the car, the chassis, the tyres as well as the engine. It was a combination. Several times later that season I managed to be quickest, which started all the protests. I was delighted, because my engines, which were built by Max Heidegger, were stripped three times. Every time it happened, the scrutineers declared that they were one hundred per cent legal."

Jürgen Barth swears equally firmly that Porsche has no policy of producing special engines. *"Any such suggestion is idiotic,"* he says. *"I know that Stefan's time round Silverstone was pretty amazing, because it's a fast circuit with only five corners. What I have to say, though, is that the only explanation for Stefan's achievement is that he has that 'spark' that I mentioned earlier. It's not so difficult to explain the Nürburgring lap, because it's a particularly difficult circuit, where a man's ability shows up immediately. When you know the circuit really well you sometimes think you've done an averagely fast lap when, in fact, you've done a very quick one."*

The only crack in this otherwise credible theory is that some members of the Porsche management often seem to be just a bit too enthusiastic about Bellof. They have an unshakeable faith in his ability - which is understandable - but occasionally they go over the top about him. It happened after his big shunt at the Nürburgring, when they went out of their way to make excuses for him. But Jürgen Barth does no such thing.

"The 'Ring is a dangerous circuit, and the 956 is a ground effects car. For some reason the ground effect was lost and Stefan went off the road. He crashed at terrific speed, so I'm pretty happy that this sort of thing is unlikely to happen in the future when we race at the new 'Ring. It's going to be much more suitable for the present breed of car..."

Asked about the same incident, its victim seemed much less disconcerted than his employers. *"I didn't go over a kerb and I wasn't going balls-out when it happened: I was doing the same sort of speed that I'd been going at earlier on. The car lifted off without warning and took me off the road. I'm told that it's a long time since anyone destroyed a works Porsche racing car so comprehensively, but I didn't get any flak. Even if it had been proved that it was completely my fault, we're all fallible, you know. Look at Jochen Mass: he's been doing this game for ten years and he's one of the most intelligent drivers around. But at Silverstone that didn't help him from making a mistake when the track got slippery and putting it into the barrier."*

The incident which destroyed "007" - the chassis raced by Bellof and Derek Bell at the Nürburgring - had an understandable interest for the British driver, whose version of what happened doesn't exactly fit in with the Porsche explanation or with Bellof's. *"Stefan's pole position didn't surprise me unduly. He really knows the circuit, and he was going flat out. When Jacky Ickx did a 6m 16s lap he packed it in for the day, because he didn't want to take the risk of shunting the car by trying to go even quicker. Personally, I think I would have been capable of doing 6m 12s under perfect conditions. The mistake that Stefan made in the race was caused by youth and inexperience: I was extremely upset at the time, and I must admit that I let my frustration get the better of me. We were leading the race, and it didn't look as though anyone had a chance of catching us. During the stint that I had just completed the team orders were to keep lapping at 6m 45s. So I lapped at 6m 45s. When Stefan took over he was given the same instructions. His second lap was 6m 39s, his third was 6m 26s, and he crashed on the third. What was he trying to prove? That he's a quick driver? We knew in qualifying that he was an ace, but we are endurance drivers who are paid to finish races. I don't want to knock Stefan's driving ability, in spite of what happened, because I'm sure he'll get over it. He's an amazing guy, you know, just made for Formula 1..."*

Perfect gentleman that he is, Derek was careful not to add *"... and the sooner he goes the better,"* despite the fact that that may be what he's thinking. Today, the old theory that some drivers are cut out for speed and others for endurance is beginning to look weary as the two qualities get closer. It's a long time since the pundits insisted that really fast guys weren't bright enough to win 1000 km races. And when Porsche signed up Bellof it was only their way of recognising this new breed of endurance drivers.

"We've had to change our policy completely," says Barth: *"we've had to choose drivers purely on the basis of speed. Look at Lancia: they've recruited F1 drivers like Riccardo Patrese, Michele Alboreto, Teo Fabi and Piercarlo Ghinzani. Thierry Boutsen was in the winning car at Monza, Derek Warwick in the one that won Brands Hatch. We had to fit in with the latest trend, because there's nothing to be gained by sticking to old ideas for nostalgia's sake. Without making too much of the matter, it's been to our advantage. Those two fantastic laps in practice by Stefan, at Silverstone and the Nürburgring, produced a lot of publicity for us back home in Germany. The specialist racing press gave Stefan lots of ink and made a point of acknowledging the fact that we had given him his big chance."*

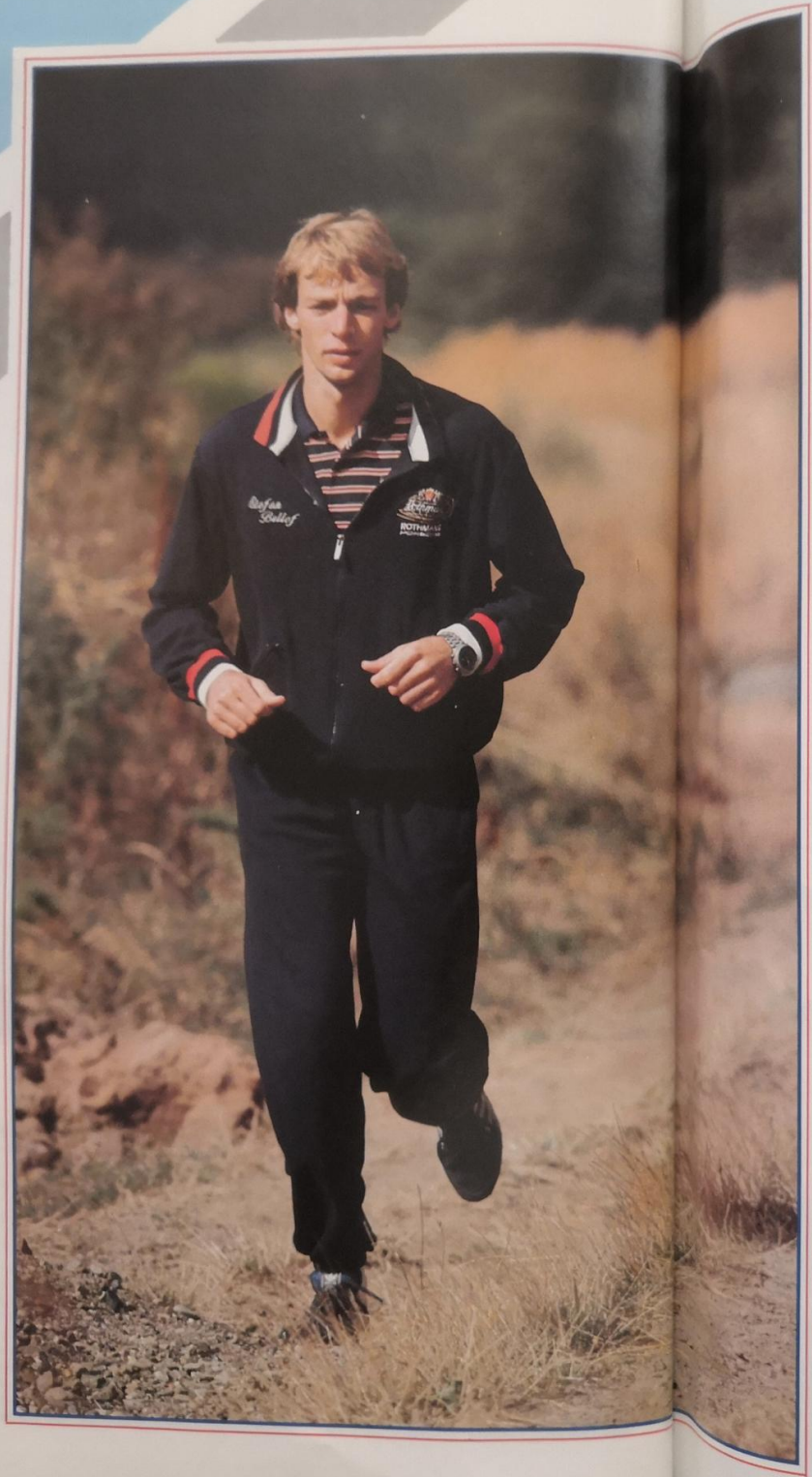
In the calm family atmosphere at Giessen, where the room in which he has slept since he was a child is always ready for his return, Stefan Bellof feels most at home. Far from the bustle of the circuits and the passions roused by his exploits, and close to the parents who still call upon his help when business demands it, he looks like a kid who's had the luck to find himself living in his own fairy stories. Once we're sitting in the Porsche 928 and heading for the gym where a fully qualified PT instructor looks after every aspect of his personal fitness programme, Stefan talks of Formula 1. It is his ultimate goal, and during the summer he made the tour of several circuits (Hockenheim, Zeltweg and Zandvoort) to open discussions with team managers. One of them was Ron Dennis of McLaren, whose cars now happen to have TAG turbo engines designed and built by Porsche.

"It's true that my first choice is to race single-seaters: I am determined, if possible, to get into F1 next year. It's very difficult, because it's money that basically decides who gets the rides, and there isn't a very wide choice available. That's the reason why I force myself to get to know the different people involved, so that they can get used to me being around: it's a necessary part of the job, although I hate doing it. It's no insult to Porsche to admit that I got into their team by luck: it was a great opportunity which I wasn't really expecting at the time. I'm delighted that it happened that way, and my life is very enjoyable. But I feel that my true vocation is F1. Not because of the money that an F1 driver can earn, but because it's the ultimate expression of a driver's ability".

For this reason it usually happens that a driver doesn't think twice when he's offered an F1 opportunity, regardless of the fact that the car might not be particularly good. One thinks of Kenny Acheson and the RAM March, and Stefan Bellof found himself in a similar situation with the ATS team:

"I got a call from Schmid before the German GP asking me if I would race the ATS in the last four GPs of the year. I told Willi Maurer and Porsche about it, then I called Schmid back to ask if we could meet at Hockenheim; meanwhile, I made no commitment one way or the other. He didn't sound at all enthusiastic by then and when I went there I learned from several people that he'd told the press a series of stories that were very different from what had really happened. I understand that he claimed he'd made no offer to me, and that it wasn't worth believing what I said. The way that I felt after that, there was obviously no point in trying to take the matter any further with him".

With his background of solid values, Stefan Bellof's mission in life is to make a success of a world which is cruel, even pitiless. His biggest asset is that one lap, 6m 11.13s, at the Nürburgring. It should be more than sufficient to get him over any youthful mistakes he may have made. □



An accomplished athlete, Stefan Bellof is a frequent visitor of the Fitness und Freizeit Center, a gym not far from his home, where he also spends several hours each week jogging. It takes serious physical preparation to drive a Porsche 956 on its limit. (photo: Asset)

MARCH 707

At the end of 1969, four Englishmen were putting the finishing touches to a project which as they later admitted had got out of hand. They were creating a new company, March Engineering Ltd, out of virtually nothing except their own individual talents. Their plans: a full programme of Formula 1, Formula 2, Formula 3 and Can-Am racing, with works teams in each. For Max Mosley, Alan Rees, Graham Coaker and Robin Herd, the plan suffered from being over-ambitious. After a poor 1970 season something had to go: it was to be the 707 Can-Am car.

by Didier Braillon

The original idea of forming March came to its four creators halfway through the 1969 season, when they had started to put together an F1 programme based around the talents of Jochen Rindt. The Austrian offered them some cautious encouragement, but his destiny took a step in a different direction when he was persuaded to sign with Lotus for 1970, becoming the sport's only posthumous world champion.

With Europe's motorsport Press having agreed not to breathe a word of the new project until its official unveiling early in 1970 (could such a secret be kept these days?), the most important objective was to sell cars and take deposits before the bank got too nervous about the mounting overdraft...

The first serious customer was to be Ken Tyrrell, whose F1 team had just won the first of its three world championships thanks to the abilities of Jackie Stewart and the excellent French engineering of the Ford-engined Matra MS80 which he had raced that year. In spite of the good results, Matra was trying to persuade Tyrrell to switch to the new MS120 and its V12 Matra engine. With new commercial links to Chrysler, Matra did not want to be associated with the Ford V8, but after Stewart had secretly tested the Matra V12 the Englishman preferred to keep his Ford engines and look for a different chassis.

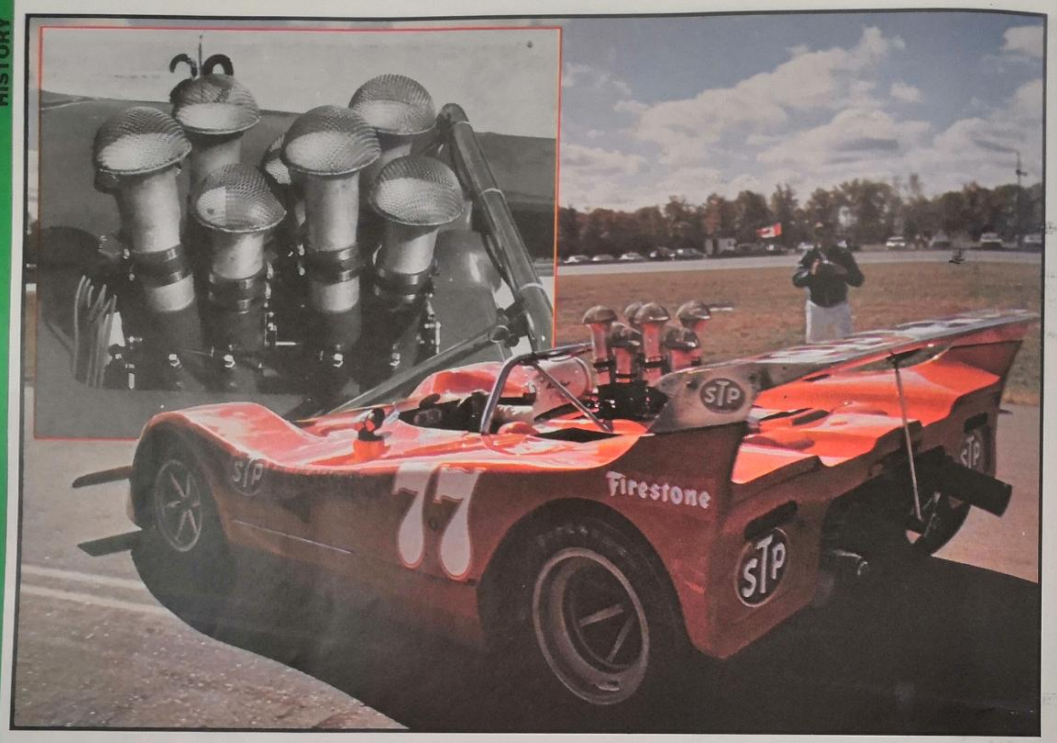
There was not much chance of an existing firm selling chassis to Tyrrell, whose excellent record suggested that he was more than capable of beating any supplier in open competition. But March was a different proposition: they were a brand new firm, and they needed every penny they could earn. Thus it was that Tyrrell placed an order tor the forthcoming March 701 chassis at a price (each) of £9000 less engine and gearbox.

Tyrrell's cars, for Stewart and his team mate, the blond Frenchman Johnny Servoz-Gavin, would face competition from an armada of March F1 cars. The STP sponsored factory team would consist of New Zealander Chris Amon and the Swiss Jo Siffert, while STP boss Andy Granatelli had ordered a private car for his own driver, the '69 Indy 500 winner Mario Andretti. Other orders came from vintage car dealer Colin Crabbe, who would run a factory-supported 701 for F1 newcomer Ronnie Peterson; and from the German F2 driver Hubert Hahne.

Incredibly, on the appointed day at Silverstone, there were examples of all the promised March single-seaters running round the circuit. All were of extremely straightforward design, having been designed in a hurry to a very strict budget by Herd, who had come to March with a promising reputation from McLaren and Cosworth. Chief works mechanic was to be Pete Kerr, a Kiwi from the Winkelmann F2 team, where he had looked after the cars of Rindt and his team mate Alan Rees, now retired from driving and starting a long management career with March.

Mosley, soon to become famous for his silver tongue, looked after the team's finances and management, while Coaker was in charge of production. Once the nine F1 monocoques had been completed and the tube-frame F2 and F3 chassis were on their way to customers from the little factory at Bicester in Oxfordshire, Herd was able to devote himself to the design of the 707 Can-Am car. He decided to make it a big car, and its basic design followed the example of the F1, with the strength of the chassis coming from specially cast magnesium bulkheads. The engine was to be the ubiquitous Chevrolet V8 that had reigned since the start of the Can-Am series in 1966, prepared in 7.6 litre guise by Chaparral in Texas. The horsepower was over 650.

March Engineering made three appearances with a works entry in the 1970 CanAm championship. Chris Amon was the driver, with a Chaparral-prepared Chevy engine producing more than 650 horsepower. (photos: DPPI on previous and following pages)



and the torque was said to be out of sight... Originally March had intended to take part in all ten of the 1970 season's Can-Am races with Amon as the driver, alternating with GPs. This plan very soon proved to be impossible due to the difficulties of running a car in North America without the infrastructure of a locally-based team or HQ. Fortunately the factory team had a second defence in the form of the recently introduced Interserie championship, a sort of European Can-Am offering five races in England, Finland and Germany. A German magazine agreed to sponsor the car, with the press-on German driver Helmut Kelleners installed in the cockpit. On the car's debut, in spite of problems with brakes, suspension and poor weight distribution, Kelleners managed to give the car a win in the rain at the Croft airfield circuit in north-eastern England, scotching rumours that the 707 might be too big to negotiate the tight chicane without doing a three-point turn...

Once the Interserie was over and the F1 season complete, March was able to turn its undivided attention to the last three races of the Can-Am, with Amon as the driver. The car that dominated that year's Can-Am was the McLaren M8D-Chevrolet driven by Denis Hulme, who won six of the ten races. March made a most unpromising debut in the series at the Donnybrooke track, Minnesota, where a suspension mounting broke in practive, obliging Amon to qualify "kamikaze" style, where upon an upright broke.
The power of the Chevy engine and Amon's considerable driving talent enabled the March 707 to get up to 2nd place in the race, until it was forced to make an unscheduled fuel stop by problems with the fuel feed from one tank to another. Amon was placed 5th overall, behind the McLarens of Hulme and Peter Gethin, the Lola T220-Chevrolet of Peter Revson and the Ferrari 512S of Jim Adams.
Immediately after the race the 707 was sent to the workshops in Chicago of Nickels Engineering, where it was stripped down and some of the more frangible suspension parts changed for stronger components. The next race, at the spectacular Laguna Seca circuit in northern California, was without any major problems, and the magnificent-looking red car claimed 4th place. Again the winner was Hulme, heading the Autocoast Ti22 of Jackie Oliver and Revson's Lola. The 707 had taken 18 points from its two North American races, and things looked good for the third, at the Riverside circuit east of Los Angeles.
Amon was holding a solid 3rd place behind Hulme and Oliver when the fuel feed problems recurred, sending him to the pits for a refill and allowing the BRM P154-Chevrolet of Pedro Rodriguez to move up a place. With 28 points, the March was classified 11th overall in the championship table.
For the following season, 1971, the March was extensively modified. The weight distribution was rearranged and a new, more conventional nose designed to give more downforce at the front. Amon had left March to join Matra as the team's number 1 driver alongside Jean-Pierre Beltoise, and it was a completely new range of March F1 and F2 cars which were attracting all the attention back in Europe. That year was a good one for the new marque, which won the F2 championship and took a remarkable 2nd place (behind Stewart) in the F1 driver's championship thanks to the huge ability of Ronnie Peterson.
The 707, now known as the 717 in revised form, never went back to the USA: instead it was seen once more in the Interserie, with Kelleners driving, using an even bigger (8.3 litre) Chevy engine producing over 700 horsepower. Before the season was over, the German had abandoned the March in favour of a Porsche 917 and the 707's career was over. It was to be more than ten years before March ventured back to American car racing. Today's March Indy cars dominate the CART championship, while in the IMSA endurance championship the successes of March cars - some in association with the Porsche factory - bear witness to the Bicester firm's mastery of a difficult market.
The March 707 might never again have seen the light of day had it not been unearthed by a group of English enthusiasts who rescued it from oblivion. Now fitted with a "small" Chevrolet V8 engine, it can be seen taking part in historic races and the "Thundersports" events: it is no stranger to Silverstone, the "home" circuit close to the factory where it was conceived and born. The British have a real gift for keeping the mechanical things they love in full running order, and it's always good to see an exceptional racing car like this one being used for its original purpose. □

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